Sweet flower in Earth's wide garden,
  May the winds of Life to you,
Caressing but your dimpled beauty,
  Blow soft as you wander through.
May those pensive eyes that wondering
  Seek out for the untold story,
Find naught of the winter darkness,
  See naught but the summer's glory.

Vol. XII.—May, 1904.—No 67.

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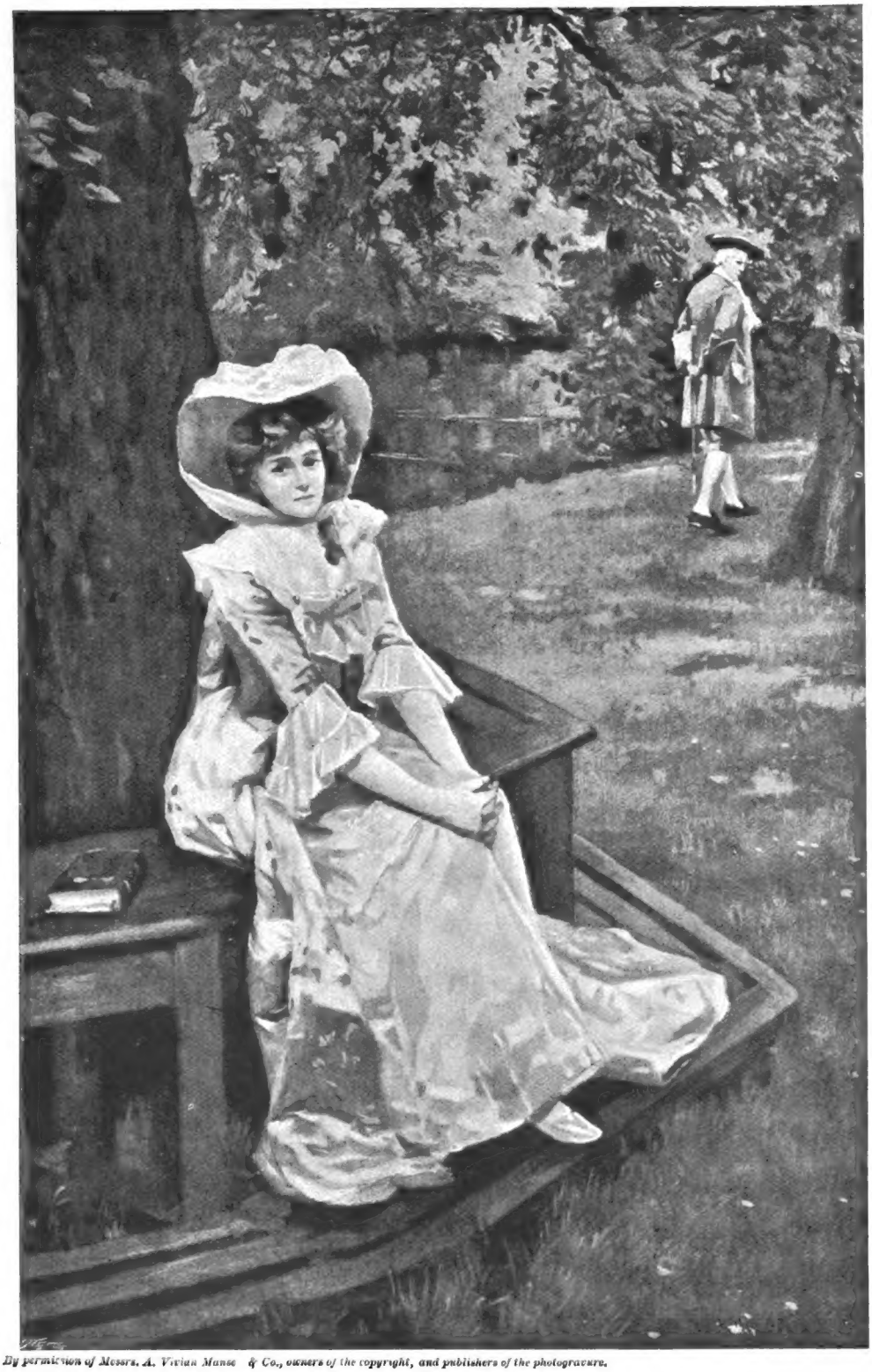

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**THE LOVERS' QUARREL.**

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# FROM THE STALLS

*Photos by* *Hana.*

## ERNEST SHAND.

A brilliant comedian of the first order—but not of the red nose, burnt cork variety. His wit is charming, his retorts and smart repartees sparkling and brilliant. Off the stage he is a musician and a composer for the guitar. 'Tis told of him that once the stage was kept waiting while messengers, booted and spurred, sped to his rooms to find the truant Shand sitting by the fire playing scales and exercises on his beloved guitar, sweetly oblivious of the world, the theatre, and everything else.

Next to the guitar comes fishing—not fishing with a float and a worm on the Serpentine or Regent's Park canal, but real salmon fishing in the beautiful salmon streams of the Yorkshire and Derbyshire dales.

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*Photo* *Biograph.*

## DENIS O'SULLIVAN.

A singer of charming Irish ballads, an actor of no mean skill, a musician, boxer and amateur strong man, a veritable catalogue of qualifications. That is Denis O'Sullivan.

He is an Irishman, and though born in California, speaks with the dulcet tongue of the south of Erin. He sang a short time ago at a smoking concert, and performed wonders between the verses of his songs with some huge dumb-bells that littered the platform, the property of some professional strong men who had just left the stage. Immense applause came from all parts of the house as he raised with the greatest of ease the heaviest of weights. He plays the violin, viola, and —his earliest love —the tin whistle.

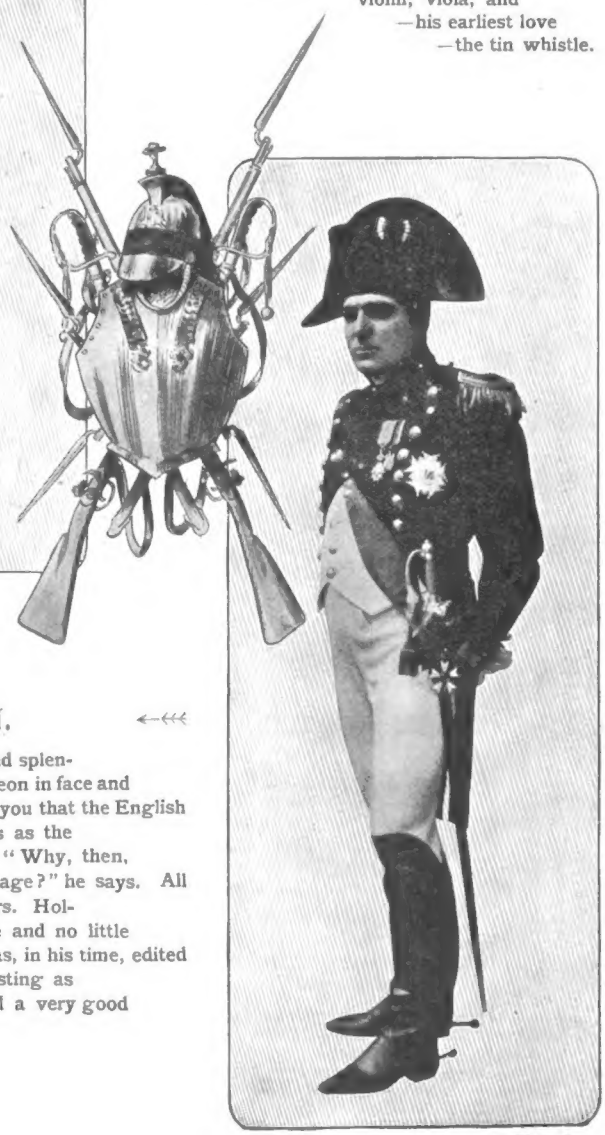

*Photo* *Biograph.*

## HOLBROOK BLINN.

Dark, swarthy as a Corsican, features clean and splendidly cut, Holbrook Blinn is a born Napoleon in face and form. He is an American, and tells you that the English stage is not half so much invaded by Americans as the stage "over there" is by Englishmen. "Why, then, should not I invade the English stage?" he says. All the better for us, say the ROYAL and its readers. Holbrook Blinn is a man of much experience and no little travel. Amongst other things he has, in his time, edited an educational monthly. But journalism, interesting as it is, had to give way to the stage. And a very good thing for the stage!

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*Photo by Ellis & Walery.*

## NINA SEVENING.

"When did I begin my stage career? Well—let me see—when I was quite a little girl—ever so long ago——" No, no, Miss Nina; not quite so long ago as all that. "Since then I have been working hard, singing and dancing, and dancing and singing, and all the time learning as much as I can about acting. I have had no adventures—no railway accidents, motor car smashes, or runaway horses; just steady work." Yet, in spite of all this hard work, Miss Nina Sevening is as pretty as a picture and as fresh as a May morning. She is a very strong-willed young lady, and we strongly suspect that as a child was a very naughty one—only, don't tell her we said so!

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*Photo by* *Ellis & Walery.*

## BEERBOHM TREE.

The leading actor-manager in the country, the man who can produce the most marvellous plays and stage them superbly, and who is afraid of neither public nor critic. That is Tree, the manager. Tree, the actor, is versatile, brilliant and wonderful. He is a king of make-up. Have you seen him as Herod; thin, cadaverous, bearded and Assyrian? Think again. Tree as Falstaff; bulky isn't the word for him. The make-up of his face is a marvel. He and the great French actor, Coquelin, once acted together at a benefit matinée. Cried Coquelin to Tree: "The padding of your cheeks. It is superb—wonderful. Let me feel it. Ah!—*sacré nom!* There is nothing there!"

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*Photo by* *Ellis & Walery.*

## LENA ASHWELL.

She was born at sea. That is to say, on board the training ship Boscawen, of which her father was Captain. She then lived in Canada, passing her early life in a wooden house by the St. Lawrence River. "My first part," she writes, "was very short, but a great deal to me. All I had to say was: 'Did you ring, sir?' and 'Yes, sir.'"

No part Miss Ashwell has ever acted has been so terribly wearing as "The Darling of the Gods"—the part in which the above photograph shows her, and in which she has made, perhaps, her greatest success.

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*Photo by* *Chancellor.*

## HAIDÉE GUNN.

The stage is a serious profession, where the work is hard and the plums are difficult to get. But Haidée Gunn, by her hard work and her talents, has risen high in her profession and intends to rise higher yet. She started her career under the wise auspices of her mother, after an education abroad in a convent. "I have no hobbies," she writes, "save my profession, and am in no way interesting."—[I doubt the veracity of that statement.—Ed. ROYAL.]—"I was intended for the medical profession, but somehow I preferred the stage. Perhaps it is better to make people happy than to cure them when they are unhappy. That's all there is to tell."

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# Mr Cottlespill's Ocean

*The Story of a Little Girl; her Clandestine Friendship with the Grocer; and the Good that Came of it.*

By Herbert Fordwych of Aldwych.

On the day before her eleventh birthday Elsinora Evelyn Outram was in Mr. Cottlespill's shop buying green figs—or, rather, the maid was buying green figs, and Elsinora was talking to Mr. Cottlespill.

"My father is F.R.G.S.," she told him, "and he has gone to find out where the North Pole goes to."

"Yes?" said Mr. Cottlespill.

"Yes," said Elsinora. "And it's flat at the top, like an orange, you know." And, seeing Mr. Cottlespill's look of surprise, Elsinora explained.

"It's wonderful!" ejaculated the little grocer. "It's a masterpiece! Revolvin' on *axes!*"

Mr. Cottlespill was amazed.

"Would you like me to come round *every* afternoon to explain things?" asked Elsinora, gratified by the impression she had made —"to teach you, you know?"

"It'd be the heighth of my ambition," declared the old man with emphasis.

A day or two later a blue-eyed, flaxen-haired figure appeared in the shop with a geographical textbook as earnest of her intentions, and a scandalised maidservant for chaperon.

"They tried to prevent my coming," she confessed. "But I'm to have my own way—my father said so; and they had to give in."

Mr. Cottlespill led the way to a little parlour immediately behind the shop, and there Elsinora unfolded her plan of campaign.

"I am coming here for an hour every day," she announced; "and we're going to start with geography."

Mr. Cottlespill rubbed his hands.

"Our ordinary names are too long," continued the young lady, who had evidently given the matter some thought, "so I shall call you the Wangoo, and you must call me Princess—after the story of the Wangoo who was taught by the Princess and found her a way out of her troubles, you know."

Another discovery!—Mr. Cottlespill had never heard of either the Wangoo or the Princess!

From that day the little grocer led a changed life. Geography and astronomy, Hans Andersen, Daniel Defoe, and Æsop formed part of a curriculum which was as comprehensive as it was diverse. Incidentally, Mr. Cottlespill encountered the Princess who taught and the Wangoo, of immortal memory, who found her a way out of her troubles; and this, having a personal interest, became an especial favourite of his.

Sometimes Elsinora would bring letters from her father to read to her pupil. And one day she came in with her eyes big with excitement.

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"Something has happened!" she cried. "My father has found—what do you think?"

Mr. Cottlespill reflected.

"What would it be now?" he asked, with his head on one side.

"AN OCEAN!" said Elsinora in capital letters.

"Found a ocean, 'as 'e?" said the grocer, taking a long breath. "It does him credit, an' no mistake."

"Finding's keepings," said the explorer's daughter; "so it's his own, and he can call it what he likes."

"It's like Clumbers," declared Mr. Cottlespill, finding a parallel in the discovery of America.

The papers were full of the news.

In those far-off regions of the North, hewing his way past the barriers which Nature has erected to guard her most cherished secret, James Outram had found a hitherto undiscovered sea of vast extent hundreds of miles from the Arctic Ocean.

Indirectly Mr. Cottlespill was a sufferer by this achievement, for in the absence of the explorer himself his little daughter was fêted to an extent that would have turned the head of a less self-possessed young damsel.

After a while, however, the lessons were renewed; and things were settling down again when Fortune decreed that Mr. Cottlespill was a fit and proper person to partake of her bounty.

Accordingly a few weeks after his young friend's astonishing announcement *he* received a letter which set forth—in precise and legal phrases—that a distant relative had died and left to him, Jeremiah Cottlespill, a fortune of something over twenty thousand pounds.

Mr. Cottlespill couldn't believe his spectacles. He took them off, wiped them deliberately, and put them on again. But the words were still there, and the figures were unaltered. Twenty thousand pounds! Mr. Cottlespill awaited Elsinora's coming that day with rather more than his usual impatience.

"I've got a piece of news for you, Princess," he informed her as soon as she arrived. "Guess what it is!"

"You're going to be married," suggested the imaginative young lady with characteristic promptitude.

"Not yet awhile," said the old man, with a chuckle. "No. But what'd you say to money? What would you say to thousands?"

"Wangoo!" exclaimed the delighted child with instant comprehension, "you've been left a fortune. And—and it's like a fairy tale."

Like a fairy tale indeed.

But it proved to be glorious reality, and the first evidence was the purchase of a delightful little escritoire for Elsinora.

A thought was troubling that young person.

"When you give up the shop," she asked, "what is going to happen to our lessons, Wangoo?"

"The shop ain't a-goin' to be given up, Princess," said the old man; "consequently, nothin's goin' to happen to the lessons if it rests with me to make it so."

This was delightful hearing; and sixty minutes of sunshine continued to brighten the succeeding twenty-three hours of Mr. Cottlespill's daily life.

Then happened an event fraught with mighty consequences for the strangely-assorted pair.

Elsinora's father returned to England; and one day the young lady greeted Mr. Cottlespill with an announcement that took away his breath.

"My father is ruined, Wangoo."

Mr. Cottlespill could hardly believe his ears.

"Ruined!" he gasped.

"Ruined," repeated Elsinora with importance. "So am I—I'm ruined too!"

The grocer turned, with a bewildered air, to the maid who was with her.

"It's true enough," said the woman in a confidential whisper. "Makes no secret of it neither. Called us together this morning, and said we was at liberty to leave as soon as we found places to suit."

"What's the cause?" asked the little tradesman, with the look of bewilderment still on his face.

"Speculations," whispered the maid at a venture.

"Is it a large amount?" he hazarded in a hushed voice. Elsinora was examining the contents of her purse.

"Twenty thousand pounds, they say," said the woman. "It's a smash."

It was indeed!

"Twenty thousand pounds." Mr. Cottlespill caught at the amount. It was certainly an odd coincidence.

When the maid went off he and the child looked at each other.

"Now, if you were a real Wangoo," said she, "you would find a Way."

Mr. Cottlespill nodded acquiescence.

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"How about offering the loan of a trifle of, say, ten or twenty thousand?" he suggested in a careless tone.

"My father," said Elsinora, with a slight flush, "would never take it. It wouldn't be cricket."

Mr. Cottlespill's face fell. This was evidently *not* the Way.

But that night a brilliant thought came to Jeremiah Cottlespill. Why not offer to buy the Ocean? That was it! Or, stay. Better, make a bid for the right of naming it. That would be the same thing almost, and would look more natural. Mr. Cottlespill told himself that he had found a way.

He must be wary though. It would never do to betray his real motive. What about a reasonable price, now? He might ruin his chance of success and rouse the proud man's suspicions by offering an unreasonable sum. Mr. Cottlespill took guarded counsel.

"You know something about the worth o' liquid," said he to the milkman next morning. "What would you say was the value of a fair-sized ocean—in round figures," added the little man, "and not bein' pertickler to a few gallons?"

"You're bein' funny," remarked the dispenser of lacteal fluid tensely.

"I'm not," said Mr. Cottlespill. "I want to know."

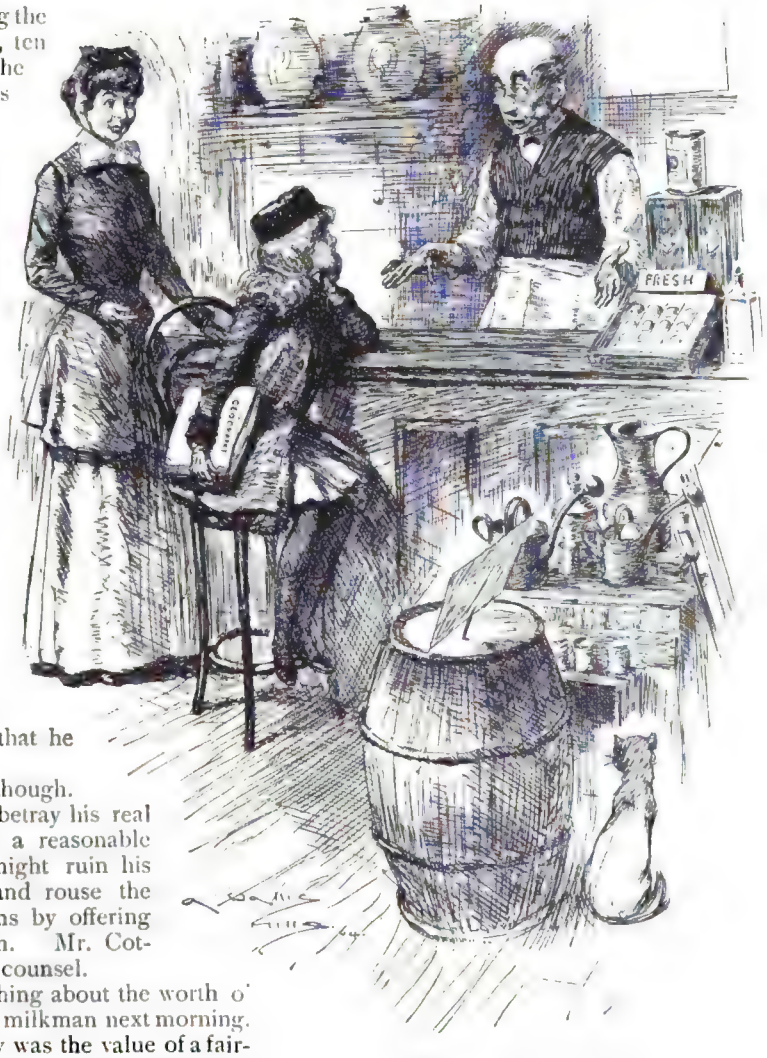
"Tell me again," invited the expert.

"Of a ocean—the value?" hinted the grocer eagerly.

The milkman scratched his head.

"A lot'd depend upon the quality," he replied judicially.

"Supposin' it to be good quality and good measure," said the other, "what would you say to twenty thousand pound for a ocean which answered them descriptions"




**"Ruined!" he gasped.**

"I'd take it," answered the milkman simply. "I'd take it, and be thankful."

Forty-eight hours later Mr. Cottlespill was ushered into the presence of his insolvent patron.

"You wished to see me?" inquired Elsinora's father, with Elsinora's smile in his eyes.

"I did sir," answered Mr. Cottlespill. He was not nervous, but the house had taken away his breath a little. He regarded the outsides of big houses as a matter of course, but the inside of one of them was by way of being a revelation. Palms, pictures, statuary! *Hers* too! And to remain hers if only he acquitted himself well.

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**His visitor took bundle after bundle of banknotes from his bag and "stacked" them on the table.**

"It's about the ocean," said Mr. Cottlespill, gripping the handle of a black bag which he carried.

The explorer looked at him with a wrinkle on his forehead.

"Discovered by you, and which you have the right of namin'," explained his visitor.

"Yes," said the other, with sudden enlightenment.

"I'll give you twenty thousand pound for the right of callin' it after me," said the man with the bag, plunging boldly into the middle of things.

"My dear Mr. ——"

"Cottlespill — Jeremiah — Cottlespill," prompted that gentleman.

"My dear Mr. Cottlespill," exclaimed the astonished discoverer, "I'm afraid I don't understand you."

"If there's one thing I've always been partial to," said Mr. Cottlespill, "it's a ocean. If there's one thing I've longed for more'n another it is to possess a ocean. To have a ocean called after me would be the highth of my ambition; and I'm willing to pay twenty thousand pound to have it come to pass."

"It's a most extraordinary whim!" said Outram in amazement. "I've never heard of such a thing!"

"I've lain awake at nights thinking of it," urged the little grocer. "My own ocean—the Cottlespill Ocean! Why, it'd be dirt cheap at the price!"

"You appear to be in earnest," said the other, looking at him curiously.

"I've come here to make a bargain," returned Mr. Cottlespill, "and if I don't make that bargain I take this bag and chuck twenty thousand odd pounds straight into the River Thames."

"You're talking at random," expostulated the scientist.

"As sure as my name's Cottlespill!" said his visitor steadily.

There was a quiet determination about the little man that staggered his listener.

Twenty thousand pounds! It would mean salvation to him. This man's proposal sounded preposterous; but was it really so absurd—was it impracticable?

Mr. Outram considered.

What would the R.G.S. think of such a suggestion with regard to the ocean? It would certainly be a somewhat unusual request to have to make, but he had not the slightest doubt that any wish he might express on the subject of its nomenclature would be regarded as law by his brethren of the Royal Geographical Society.

After all, the distinction meant little to him; whereas the money would renew his damaged credit and save him from the necessity of abandoning his beloved pursuit.

Then again there was Elsinora——

"If you mean what you say," said he, breaking the silence at last, "I will accept your offer on one condition."

"Yes," said Mr. Cottlespill with tremulous eagerness.

"That, should you repent of having made it, you will allow me to repay the amount in full."

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"There'll be no repentin'," said the little tradesman promptly, "and no repayin'. Business is business, and a bargain's a bargain. Here's the money."

James Outram pinched himself to see if he were really awake, as his visitor took bundle after bundle of banknotes from his bag and "stacked" them on the table.

"To make all fair and square,"-spoke Mr. Cottlespill when this was done, "and to make sure there'll be no givens back or anything o' that suppose we have it in black and white."

Mr. Outram took a sheet of note-paper and wrote upon it:—

"In consideration of the sum of twenty thousand pounds received this day, I undertake that the ocean discovered by me in the recent Polar expedition shall be called the Cottlespill Ocean; and further undertake to see that it is registered by that title on the books and maps of the Royal Geographical Society."

He felt dazed as he read it aloud to the little grocer. The whole thing seemed so dreamlike and absurd, and yet——

"You'd better put it in safe keepin', sir," suggested Mr. Cottlespill as he caught the glance which his host cast in the direction of the money.

It still seemed like a dream to the emancipated speculator as he stored the notes away in his little iron safe, and still like a dream as he walked to the hall door with the man who had changed places with him.

"Like as not," said Mr. Cottlespill, as he stood on the doorstep, "we'll not be seein' each other again. P'raps it wouldn't be considered in the light of a liberty if I was to ask you to tell Miss Elsie Nora that the Wangoo found a Way."

"That the Wangoo found a way," repeated his host mechanically. (This was all part of the dream, of course.)

"That's it," said Mr. Cottlespill simply. "I wish you good-day, sir."

A week later Mr. Outram received a letter.

DEAR SIR (IT RAN),—I have changed my mind about the name of the Ocean. If not too late I would wish it called the Elsie Nora,

Yours respectful,

JEREMIAH COTTLESPILL.

P.S.—Having left the naborood, it will be no use maken attemp to find me, so please consider it as settled permenent.

Then Elsinora's father understood.

# RETRIBUTION

A HALOED head, a figure neat,
The fairiest of fairy feet,
A movement full of grace
I saw before me in the street,
And quickening my pace,
I fell adreaming of a sweet,
Nay, perfect face.

I reached my destination; yet,
Like other men that I have met,
I walked a mile to gain
One glimpse of her o'er pavements wet
And under driving rain. . . .
Her face I never shall forget! . . .
'Twas passing plain!

J. J. B.

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# THE LAND OF TOPSYTURVYDOM

*All about the Customs and Oddities of the Japanese.*

By Bertram Stower.

The Japanese of to-day, in spite of the great progress they have made during the past thirty years, and the many things they have learnt from the West, are just as much Japanese as ever they were.

They are the same Japanese that we love to think of as doing nearly everything in the opposite way to ourselves. No doubt they think of us in exactly the same light; but that is another matter. At present we are writing of the odd customs of the Japanese.

Japan is still the same "looking-glass" land of yore, as full of topsyturvydom and contrarinesses as it ever was.

The women carry their babies on their backs instead of in their arms, and instead of trying to keep their teeth white they stain them black. In England every women wishes to remain young as long as she possibly can. But it is precisely the opposite in the Land of the Chrysanthemum. There her one object in life is to grow old as fast as she can, and the more wrinkles and crow's feet she has on her face, the happier she becomes.

The Society lady does not want to be considered pretty. She would be most insulted if anyone dared to compliment her up n her looks. *Only the common mousmées are nice-looking, and she scorns their round brown eyes and pretty faces.* They are vulgar and beneath her contempt. They have not "the almond eyes" of the aristocracy.

This is the way the women carry their babies in Japan

From time immemorial Japanese books have been written from the right to the left; and they are to-day. To commence reading one you must open a book at what we consider the end, and continue reading until you arrive at what we call the beginning.

It is the same with their letters, which, by the way, are not written with pens but with brushes. When the letter is "painted" it is folded up and addressed. This is done in the oddest conceivable manner. A Japanese never writes the name of the person first. That is altogether the wrong end to begin according to his ideas. He first puts the country, then the town, thirdly, the name or number of the house, and, last of all, the name of the person he is writing to. So, if an ordinary Japanese wrote to the Editor of the Royal, he would address the letter thus:

England.
London,
Street Henrietta,
Magazine Royal,
Editor, The

By an ordinary Japanese I mean one that does not belong to the smarter set. Oh, yes, Japan has its "smart set" just the same as we have ourselves. It is divided into two classes, the "breeched" and the "unbreeched." As the name implies, the "breeched" are those Japanese that wear trousers.

This is by far the smarter set, the Mikado himself, his ambassadors, politicians, and most men of high importance numbering themselves amongst

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its supporters. It is they that have brought Japan to the front as an Eastern Power.

Although down in the bottom of their hearts they abhor trousers, yet they realise that no nation that does not don the breeches can become a Great Power.

On all State occasions, and whenever they walk out in public, the "breeched set" are never seen without this Western appendage. Yet even the general, resplendent in gold braid and medals, immediately on entering his house throws off the hateful "west," and five minutes later will be squatting on the floor enveloped in his comfortable "kimono."

The "unbreeched" set comprise those that will not sacrifice the long, wide, flowing robe called the kimono on any consideration. They are not allowed to go to the Emperor's garden parties as there only European dress is the order of the day.

The Japanese carpenter draws his plane towards him when cutting wood, and the thread of all screws runs from left to right, a husband enters a room before his wife, and the footman instead of riding on the box of the carriage runs in front.

These are only a few of the topsyturvydoms of the little Jap. When he meets you in the street and wishes to be very polite, he does not take off his hat in salutation, he takes off his slippers. This is because the Japanese, as a nation, do not wear hats.

A husband always enters a room before his wife.

Let us suppose that you have been invited out to dinner by a Japanese of the truest almond eyes.

As you approach his house, which is usually a one-storeyed building, you may see him strolling round his garden. Here you must be very careful. On no account must you walk up, seize him by the hand, and ask him how he is. That would be a great breach of etiquette, for you would take your host by surprise, which would be terribly impolite.

This is how you must approach: When within fifty yards cough loudly. Most likely he will not hear you, so cough again and clear your throat. Then, as you get nearer, raise your voice and call out: "*Gomen Nasai*," which means, "pardon, if you please."

You can then draw near without any fear of disturbing the little man's nerves.

By this time the servants will be waiting at the door to greet you, but you can see nothing of them except the tops of their elaborate headwear and the big folds of their *obi*—or red sashes—for they are all kneeling with their heads bowed down to the ground.

Before entering the house you must first take off your boots; your host then leads you into a room absolutely destitute of furniture. The floor is covered with mats, and scattered around are many flat cushions.

Presently dinner is announced, and he leads you into a room where the repast is laid out on the floor. This consists of several varieties of fish and chicken; and for vegetables, millet and beans. *The guests now kneel down on the flat cushions and sit on their heels in a circle around the meal*, for there are no chairs in a Japanese house.

All is most scrupulously clean, for the Japanese are amongst the cleanliest nations in the world both as regards person and things.

The food is tempting, but there are no knives and forks. Everything is eaten with chopsticks, and you must bring these yourself if you wish your manners to be above reproach. There is nothing more difficult in the world to a European than to eat his dinner with chopsticks, yet the Japanese manipulate them with astonishing skill, picking up lumps of ice with quite as much ease as pieces of fish.

All through the meal the host flits around, sitting in turns beside each guest. This is a rigid custom.

As may be expected, tea makes its appearance; but other national drinks, such as saké, an intoxicating beverage,

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The Japanese gentlemen salute each other by taking off their sandals.

made from rice, lemonade and beer are also taken.

At dinner it is the etiquette that you should drink wine with everybody. That is to say, everyone must drink wine out of your cup. But the Japanese love of cleanliness does not permit of this being done in the "loving-cup" fashion. After emptying the cup, you dip it into a bowl of water placed at your side for that purpose, and then pass it to the gentleman with whom you desire to drink. He takes it, holds it up for an attendant to refill, drinks, and politely hands it back to you.

Here the guests all commence smacking their lips to show their appreciation of the meal. If anyone omits to do this the host is mortally offended; he imagines you do not relish his fare.

After numerous other foods have been brought in, and you are beginning to think you have had sufficient, etiquette demands that you ask for rice to be served. This is a polite hint that you have eaten enough. But, in spite of it, each guest is expected to eat at least three bowls of rice.

When at last the meal is over, the pieces that remain are gathered together by the servants and placed in neat little boxes, one of which is presented to each guest before he leaves.

Although it is not very apparent, there is a great deal of method about the little Japanese. There is a meaning in everything they do; if they give their children toys, it is with the sole object that they may learn something from them. The children play with all sorts of toys, and they never break them. A favourite game is to play at "cooking."

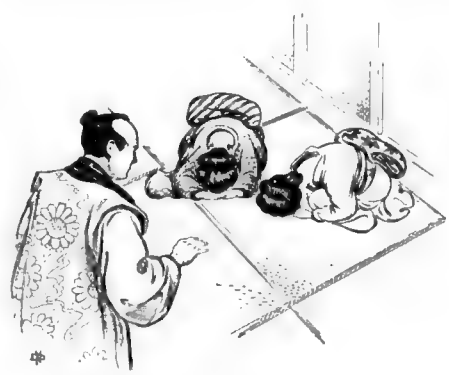
Their playground is the middle of the road, and to play at "cooking" they have to go to the *Ameya*. He is the man that makes toys out of dough. With a brass pipe he blows it, as the Venetians blow glass, into cocks and cupids of fantastic forms. Around him are several little copper stoves, all heated with tiny charcoal fires. The children rush to him and for the sum of one cash (a coin with a hole in the middle worth about the thousandth part of ninepence) are given a piece of dough and the use of a stove in which to cook the tiny cakes they make from it.

There are very few horses in Japan. The people drive about in rikshas, light carriages drawn by a rikshaboy. Even heavy waggon-loads of hay are drawn by men.

The Jap that drives a horse has to take as many precautions as the man in England who drives a traction engine. In front of his prancing steed a man runs blowing a tin whistle for all he is worth. This is necessary, for the children all play in the middle of the road.

Altogether the streets present a curious sight to the traveller, who, as he walks along, can almost see over the roofs of the houses. There is the continuous patter of clogs, and the sharp cries of the rikshaboys, as they thread their way through the crowds of children spinning tops, and skipping, or flying kites, while the sides of the road are occupied by the grown-up Japs squatting outside their houses taking the air.

Etiquette, spelt with a very big E, is everywhere in Japan. If you bestow a present upon a Japanese, although he may be burning with curiosity to examine the contents of the parcel, etiquette forbids that he should open it in your presence. When the gift is placed in his hand, he merely glances at it with apparent indifference, makes some casual remark, and then places it on the floor with the slightest perceptible acknowledg-



How the little mousmées greet their master when he enters his house.

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ment. It would be the height of ill-breeding for him to appear pleased, or to thank you warmly.

Shopping is a tedious experience in Tokyo. Here the best shops have nothing in the window to attract the passer-by. Immediately you enter the attendants all salaam most respectfully, but do not make the slightest attempt to serve you. In vain you look around for something to buy, but there is not an article of any sort to be seen.

Everything is kept in the godown, which is a kind of storeroom at the back of the shop.

After you have been waiting for some minutes the attendants offer you five cups of tea; and it is most important that you should drink this tea, for unless you do they at once put you down as a worthless person and charge double the price for all their goods. This is the etiquette of Japanese shopping.

Knives and forks are almost unknown in the Land of the Chrysanthemum. Everything is eaten with chopsticks.

Presently the proprietor makes his appearance and more salaams follow. You then explain to him what you want, and he immediately orders the attendants to bring the required article. Away they run to the godown, and shortly return, each carrying a bundle of goods tied up in faded green silk handkerchiefs.

It usually takes them about half a day before they discover what you want. That is precisely why the Japanese shopman never allows anyone to inspect his whole stock in the godown. He would choose too quickly and then leave the shop at once; whereas, when everything is brought up piecemeal, he sees so many things, and consequently buys twice as much.

Perhaps the most wonderful thing in Japan is the manner in which a dentist extracts teeth. He uses no instruments whatever. Gripping the tooth with his fingers, he pulls it out in less time than it would take the most skilful European dentist armed with the latest forceps.

When a little Jap is born it is said to be "one year old," and it will be two at the beginning of the following January, even though it is born on March 12th.

The parents cannot be worried with their children having their birthdays on different days and months. So they celebrate all the boys' birthdays on May 5th and all the girls' on March 3rd.

On the day of the "Boys' Feast" all the houses that boast of sons fly gaily-coloured paper fish hung on the tops of long bamboo poles. These are supposed to represent carp, which the Japanese declare can swim in safety against the current and leap over waterfalls. They are therefore typical of their sons, who, when they grow up, will have to fight their way in the world.

The whole country given over to rejoicing, and the boys receive presents of swords and armour, to encourage their tastes for soldiering. In the afternoon there is usually a display of fireworks. The Japanese do not go in for set pieces and rockets; they prefer smoke effects, and as these can be seen better in the day time, these shows never take place at night. There is no rejoicing when a little girl is born during the Feast of Dolls or Girls' Festival. There is nothing to be pleased at in the birth of a girl. If they marked it in any way it would be by dressing in white. This is another of their little topsyturvydoms, for white is the Japanese colour of mourning.

However, they are really very good to their little girls. They bring them up with the greatest care, and teach them to become good servant-wives.

Although the Japanese think a considerable more of sons than daughters, they spend far more on the Girls' Festival than on the Boys' Feast.

When a little girl is born the first present the parents give her is two editions of



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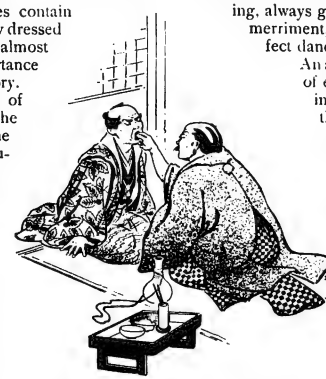
Hina-dolls. These are anything up to a foot in height and are carefully and accurately made to represent her ancestors or historical celebrities.

Japanese children are a model of carefulness; they never break their toys. The little girl will play with the Hina-dolls right on until she is old enough to marry. Even then she does not cast them aside. Oh, no! she takes her Hina-dolls to her new home. There the dear treasures of her child-days are closed up in a little cupboard, and only once a year after that, at the Feast of Dolls, does she look on them again.

Collecting toys and dolls is a hobby which most Japanese indulge in. Some of the better class houses contain hundreds of gorgeously dressed dolls, representing almost every person of importance in their country's history.

Everyone thinks of Japan as the land of the smiling little geisha. The geisha is really the educated woman of Japan. She is the entertainer, the hostess, and the brilliant conversationalist. Her education commences at a very early age. When about two years old she is taught to sing and dance and talk, and, above all, to become an attentive listener.



The dentist uses no forceps to extract teeth. He pulls them out with his fingers.

Only the prettiest and liveliest little girl in a Japanese family is sent to the geisha school at Kioto, for unless her mother sees that she will blossom into one of these gay little butterfly women, she is kept at home to nurse the baby.

At Kioto the little girls dressed in cotton kimonos commence to study graceful movements—how to walk out of a room and the exact manner to sit down and take tea, and a host of other things. They are next taught how to hold their hands, how to sway the body in musical rhythm, and twist their necks.

All this training does not make them lissome and supple. But as this is not the Japanese idea of gracefulness it does not much matter.

After three years the little girls commence to be geishas. They leave the school, but for several years return occasionally for a short time to perfect themselves.

They now wear brilliant dresses and broad sashes, and dress and decorate their abundant hair with artificial flowers or silver pins.

Afterwards they are employed at the tea houses, and receive a salary according to their popularity and skill in dancing. They then become practically the slaves of the tea house, which can hire them out to dance at private houses or to sing at birthday rejoicings.

There is nothing too brilliant for the geisha: she is the very life and soul of Japan; the one bright spot in their otherwise rather dismal life. She must be always laughing, always gay, sparkling with wit and merriment, and, above all, be a perfect dancer.

An account and full description of every foreigner that comes into Tobago is published in the newspapers. Even then he is not left alone; later on his character and many examples of his conversation appear, together with a criticism on his general behaviour in public.

It is a curious sight to see a house in the course of construction. The roof is always built first, and it weighs a great deal more than the rest of the building put together. There is a reason for this. The Japanese knows that in a typhoon it is not his own roof that he has to fear, but it is his neighbour's that is likely to be blown on to the top of his; so he builds the roof very substantially so as to withstand the shock.

Many Englishwomen will envy the Japanese when they learn that they have long ago solved the servant problem. In Japan it is considered an honour to be a servant, and only the well-educated and pleasant-mannered are permitted this privilege. Out there the servant is treated almost as one of the family. Should anyone call, it is his duty to offer him the customary five cups of tea, and to entertain him until his master arrives. Even then he does not leave the room, but joins in the conversation, cracks his jokes, and laughs loudly, just as if his master were not there.

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# THE OLD MAN IN THE CORNER

## II.—THE HOCUSSING OF CIGARETTE.

By Baroness E. Orczy.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

| | |
|---|---|
| The Earl of Okehampton ... ... ... | Owner of Cigarette. |
| Mr. Keeson ... ... ... ... ... | The trainer of Cigarette. |
| Mrs. Keeson ... ... ... ... ... | His wife. |
| Harold Keeson ... ... ... ... ... | Their son. |
| Joseph Cockram ... ... ... ... | The groom in charge of Cigarette. |
| Alice Image ... ... ... ... ... | A housemaid in the Keesons' employ. |
| Charles Palk ... ... ... ... ... | A bookmaker's tout. |
| Twiss ... ... ... ... ... ... | A Scotland Yard detective. |
| Major Laverton, J.P. ... ... ... ... | A magistrate. |
| The Lady Journalist ... ... ... ... | Who tells the story told to her by the "Old Man in the Corner" at the A.B.C. shop. |

I.

Quite by chance I found myself one morning sitting before a marble-topped table in the A.B.C. shop. I really wondered for the moment what had brought me there, and felt cross with myself for being there at all. Having sampled my tea and roll, I soon buried myself in the capacious folds of my *Daily Telegraph*.

"A glass of milk and a cheesecake, please," said a well-known voice.

The next moment I was staring into the corner, straight at a pair of mild, watery, blue eyes, hidden behind great bone-rimmed spectacles, and at ten long, bony fingers, round which a piece of string was provokingly intertwined.

There he was as usual, wearing—for it was chilly—a huge tweed ulster, of a pattern too lofty to be described. Smiling, bland, apologetic, and fidgety, he sat before me as the living embodiment of the reason why I had come to the A.B.C. shop that morning.

"How do you do?" I said, with as much dignity as I could command.

"I see that you are interested in Cigarette," he remarked, pointing to a special column in the *Daily Telegraph*.

"She is quite herself again," I said.

"Yes, but you don't know who tried to poison her and succeeded in making her very ill. You don't know whether the man Palk had anything to do with it, whether he was bribed, or whether it was Mrs. Keeson or the groom Cockram who told a lie, or why——?"

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"No," I admitted reluctantly; "I don't know any of these things."

He was fidgeting nervously in the corner, wriggling about like an animated scarecrow. Then suddenly a bland smile illuminated his entire face. His long bony fingers had caught the end of the bit of string, and there he was at it again, just as I had seen him a year ago, worrying and fidgeting, making knot upon knot, and untying them again, whilst his blue eyes peered at me over the top of his gigantic spectacles.

"I would like to know what your theory is about the whole thing," I was compelled to say at last; for the case had interested me deeply, and, after all, I had come to the A.B.C. shop for the sole purpose of discussing the adventures of Cigarette with him.

"Oh, my theories are not worth considering," he said meekly. "The police would not give me five shillings for any one of them. They always prefer a mystery to any logical conclusion, if it is arrived at by an outsider. But you may be more lucky. The owner of Cigarette did offer £100 reward for the elucidation of the mystery. The noble Earl must have backed Cigarette for all he was worth. Malicious tongues go even so far as to say that he is practically a ruined man now, and that the beautiful Lady Agnes is only too glad to find herself the wife of Harold Keeson, the son of the well-known trainer.

"If you ever go to Newmarket," continued the man in the corner after a slight pause, during which he had been absorbed in unravelling one of his most complicated knots, "anyone will point out the Keesons' house to you. It is called Manor House, and stands in the midst of beautiful gardens. Mr. Keeson himself is a man of about fifty, and, as a matter of fact, is of very good family, the Keesons having owned property in the Midlands for the past eight hundred years. Of this fact he is, it appears, extremely proud. His father, however, was a notorious spendthrift, who squandered his property, and died in the nick of time, leaving his son absolutely penniless and proud as Lucifer.

"Fate, however, has been kind to George Keeson. His knowledge of horses and of all matters connected with the turf stood him in good stead: hard work and perseverance did the rest. Now, at fifty years of age, he is a very rich man, and practically at the head of a profession, which, if not exactly that of a gentleman, is, at any rate, highly remunerative.

"He owns Manor House, and lived there with his young wife and his only son and heir, Harold.

"It was Mr. Keeson who had trained Cigarette for the Earl of Okehampton, and who, of course, had charge of her during her apprenticeship, before she was destined to win a fortune for her owner, her trainer, and those favoured few who had got wind of her capabilities. For Cigarette was to be kept a dark horse—not an easy matter in these days, when the neighbourhood of every racecourse abounds with rascals who eke out a precarious livelihood by various methods, more or less shady, of which the gleaning of early information is perhaps the least disreputable.

"Fortunately for Mr. Keeson, however, he had in the groom, Cockram, a trusted and valued servant, who had been in his employ for over ten years. To say that Cockram took a special pride in Cigarette would be but to put it mildly. He positively loved the mare, and I don't think that anyone ever doubted that his interest in her welfare was every bit as keen as that of the Earl of Okehampton or of Mr. Keeson.

"It was to Cockram, therefore, that Mr. Keeson entrusted the care of Cigarette. She was lodged in the private stables adjoining the Manor House, and during the few days immediately preceding the 'Coronation Stakes' the groom practically never left her side, either night or day. He slept in the loose box with her, and ate all his meals in her company; nor was any one allowed to come within measurable distance of the living treasure, save Mr. Keeson or the Earl of Okehampton himself.

"And yet, in spite of all these precautions, in spite of every care that human ingenuity could devise, on the very morning of the race Cigarette was seized with every symptom of poisoning, and although, as you say, she is quite herself again now, she was far too ill to fulfil her engagement, and, if rumour speaks correctly, completed thereby the ruin of the Earl of Okehampton."

II.

The man in the corner looked at me through his bone-rimmed spectacles, and his mild, blue eyes gazed pleasantly into mine.

"You may well imagine," he continued after a while, "what a thunderbolt such a catastrophe means to those whose hopes of a fortune rested upon the fitness of the bay mare. Mr. Keeson lost his temper for an instant, they say—but for one instant only. When he was hastily summoned at six o'clock in the morning to Cigarette's stables, and saw

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her lying on the straw, rigid and with glassy eyes, he raised his heavy riding-whip over the head of Cockram. Some assert that he actually struck him and that the groom was too wretched and too dazed to resent either words or blows. After a good deal of hesitation he reluctantly admitted that for the first time since Cigarette had been in his charge he had slept long and heavily.

"'I am such a light sleeper, you know, sir,' he said in a tear-choked voice. Usually I could hear every noise the mare made if she stirred at all. But, there—last night I cannot say *what* happened. I remember that I felt rather drowsy after my supper, and must have dropped off to sleep very quickly. Once during the night I woke up; the mare was all right then.'

"'No wonder you slept heavily, my man. This beer was drugged: it contained opium.'"

"The man paused, and seemed to be searching for something in his mind—the recollection of a dream, perhaps. But the veterinary surgeon, who was present at the time, having also been hastily summoned to the stables, took up the glass which had contained the beer for Cockram's supper. He sniffed it, and then tasted it, and said quietly:

"'No wonder you slept heavily, my man. This beer was drugged: it contained opium.'

"'Drugged!' ejaculated Cockram, who, on hearing this fact, which in every way exonerated him from blame, seemed more hopelessly wretched than he had been before.

"It appears that every night Cockram's supper was brought out to him in the stables by one of the servants from the Manor House. On this particular night Mrs. Keeson's maid, a young girl named Alice Image, had brought him a glass of beer and some bread and cheese on a tray at about eleven o'clock.

"Closely questioned by Mr. Keeson, the girl emphatically denied all knowledge of any drug in the beer. She had often taken the supper-tray across to Cockram, who was her sweetheart, she said. It was usually placed ready for her in the hall, and when she had finished attending upon her mistress's night toilet she went over to the stables with it. She had certainly never touched the beer, and the tray had stood in its accustomed place on the hall table looking just the same as usual. 'As if I'd go and poison my Cockram!' she said in the midst of a deluge of tears.

"All these somewhat scanty facts crept into the evening papers that same day. That an outrage of a peculiarly daring and cunning character had been perpetrated was not for a moment in doubt. So much money had been at stake, so many people would be half ruined

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by it, that even the non-racing public at once took the keenest interest in the case. All the papers admitted, of course, that for the moment the affair seemed peculiarly mysterious, yet all commented upon one fact, which they suggested should prove an important clue: this fact was Cockram's strange attitude.

"At first he had been dazed—probably owing to the after-effects of the drug; he had also seemed too wretched even to resent Mr. Keeson's very natural outburst of wrath. But then, when the presence of the drug in his beer was detected, which proved *him*, at any rate, to have been guiltless in the matter, his answers, according to all accounts, became somewhat confused; and all Mr. Keeson and the 'vet.' who were present got out of him after that, was a perpetual ejaculation: 'What's to be done? What's to be done?'

"Two days later the sporting papers were the first to announce, with much glee, that, thanks to the untiring energy of the Scotland Yard authorities, daylight seemed at last to have been brought to bear upon the mystery which surrounded the dastardly outrage on the Earl of Okehampton's mare Cigarette and that an important arrest in connection with it had already been effected.

"It appears that a man named Charles Palk, seemingly of no address, had all along been suspected of having, at least a hand in the outrage. He was believed to be a bookmaker's tout, and was a man upon whom the police had long since kept a watchful eye. Palk had been seen loafing round the Manor House for the past week, and had been warned off the grounds once or twice by the grooms.

"It now transpired that on the day preceding the outrage he had hung about the neighbourhood of the Manor House the whole afternoon, trying to get into conversation with the stable-boys or even with Mr. Keeson's indoor servants. No one, however, would have anything to do with him, as Mr. Keeson's orders in those respects were very strict: he had often threatened any one of his *employés* with instant dismissal if he found them in company with one of these touts.

"Detective Twiss, however, who was in charge of the case, obtained the information that Alice Image, the maid, had been seen on more than one occasion talking to Palk, and that on the very day before the Coronation Stakes she had been seen in his company. Closely questioned by the detective, Alice Image at first denied her intercourse with the tout, but finally was forced to admit that she had held conversation with him once or twice.

"She was fond of putting a bit now and again upon a horse, but Cockram, she added, was such a muff that he never would give her a tip, for he did not approve of betting for young women. Palk had always been very civil and nice-spoken, she further explained. Moreover, he came from Buckinghamshire, her own part of the country, where she was born; anyway, she had never had cause to regret having entrusted a half-sovereign or so of her wages to him.

"All these explanations delivered by Alice Image, with the flow of tears peculiar to her kind, were not considered satisfactory, and the next day she and Charles Palk were both arrested on a charge of being concerned in the poisoning of the Earl of Okehampton's mare Cigarette, with intent to do her grievous bodily harm."

III.

"These sort of cases," continued the man in the corner after a slight pause, during which his nervous fingers toyed incessantly with that eternal bit of string—"these sort of cases always create a great deal of attention amongst the public, the majority of whom in this country have very strong sporting proclivities. It was small wonder, therefore, when Alice Image and Charles Palk were brought before the local magistrates that the court was crowded to overflowing, both with Pressmen and with the general public.

"I had all along been very much interested in the case, so I went down to Newmarket, and, in spite of the huge crowd, managed to get a good seat, whence I could command a full view of the chief personages concerned in this thrilling sporting drama.

"Firstly, there was the Earl of Okehampton—good-looking but for an unmistakable air of the broken-down sporting man about his whole person; the trainer, Mr. Keeson—a lean, clean-shaven man, with a fine, proud carriage and a general air of ancient lineage and the 'Domesday Booke' about him; Mrs. Keeson—a pale, nervous-looking creature, who seemed very much out of place in this sporting set; and, finally, the accused—Alice Image, dissolved in tears, and Charles Palk, over-dressed, defiant, horsey, and unsympathetic.

"There was also Cockram the groom. My short-sighted eyes had fastened on him the moment I entered the court. A more wretched, miserable, bewildered expression I have never seen on any man's face.

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"Both Alice Image and Charles Palk flatly denied the charge. Alice declared, amid a renewed deluge of tears, that she was engaged to be married to Cockram, that she 'no more would have hurt him or the pretty creature he was in charge of, for anything.' How could she? As for Palk—conscious, no doubt, of his own evil reputation—he merely contented himself with shrugging his shoulders and various denials, usually accompanied with emphatic language.

"As neither of the accused attempted to deny that they had been together the day before the outrage there was no occasion to call witnesses to further prove that fact. Both, however, asserted emphatically that their conversation was entirely confined to the subject of Alice's proposed flutters on the favourite for the next day's race.

"'Joe! my Joe!' she cried; 'you know I didn't do it! Can't you do anything to help me?'"

"Thus the only really important witness was the groom Cockram. Once again his attitude as a witness caused a great deal of surprise, and gradually, as he gave his evidence in a peculiarly halting and nervous manner, that surprise was changed into suspicion.

"Questioned by the magistrate, he tried his hardest to exonerate Alice from all blame; and yet when asked whether he had cause to suspect anyone else he became more confused than ever, said, 'No,' emphatically first, then, 'Yes,' and finally looked round the court appealingly, like some poor animal at bay. That the man was hiding something, that he was, in point of fact, lying, was apparent to everyone. He had drunk the beer, he said, unsuspectingly on that fatal night; he had then dropped off to sleep almost immediately, and never woke until about 6 a.m., when a glance at the mare at once told him there that was something very wrong.

"However, whether Cockram was lying or not—whether he suspected anyone else or was merely trying to shield his sweetheart, there was, in the opinion of the magistrate, quite sufficient evidence to prove that Alice Image, at any rate, had a hand in the hocussing of Cigarette since it was she who had brought the drugged beer to Cockram. Beyond that there was not sufficient evidence to show either that she was a tool in the hands of Palk, or that they both were merely instruments in the hands of some third person.

"Anyway, the magistrate—it was Major Laverton, J.P., a great personal friend of the Earl of Okehampton, and a remarkably clever and acute man—tried his hardest to induce Alice to confess. He questioned the poor girl

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so closely and so rigorously that gradually she lost what little self-control she had, and everyone in the court blamed Major Laverton not a little, for he was gradually getting the poor girl into a state of hysterics.

"As for me, I inwardly commended the learned J.P., for already I had guessed what he was driving at, and was not the least astonished when the dramatic incident occurred which rendered this case so memorable.

"Alice Image, namely, now thoroughly unnerved, harassed with the Major's questions, suddenly turned to where Cockram was sitting, and, with a hysterical cry, she stretched out both her arms towards him.

"'Joe! my Joe!' she cried; 'you know I didn't do it! Can't you do anything to help me?'

"It was pathetic in the extreme: everyone in the court felt deeply moved. As for Cockram, a sudden change came over him. I am accustomed to read the faces of my fellow-men, and in that rough countenance I saw then emerging, in response to the girl's appeal, a quick and firm resolution.

"'Aye, and I will, Alice!' he said, jumping to his feet. 'I have tried to do my duty. If the gentlemen will hear me I will say all I know.'

"Needless to say 'the gentlemen' were only too ready to hear him. Like a man who, having made up his mind, is now resolved to act upon it, the groom Cockram began his story.

"'I told your worship that, having drunk the beer that night, I dropped off to sleep very fast and very heavy like. How long I'd been asleep I couldn't say, when suddenly something seemed not exactly to wake me but to dispel my dreams, so to speak. I opened my eyes, and at first I couldn't see anything, as the gas in the stable was turned on very low; but I put out my hand to feel the mare's fetlocks, just by way of telling her that I was there all right enough, and looking after her—bless her! At that moment, your worship, I noticed that the stable-door was open and that someone—I couldn't see who it was—was goin' out of it. "Who goes there?" says I, for I still felt very sleepy and dull, when, to my astonishment, who should reply to me but——'

"The man paused, and once more over his rough, honest face came the old look of perplexity and misery.

"'But——?' queried the magistrate, whose nerves were obviously as much on tension as those of everyone else in that court.

"'Speak, Joe—won't you?' appealed Alice Image pathetically.

"'But the mistress—Mrs. Keeson, sir,' came from the groom in an almost inaudible whisper. 'You know, ma'am,' he added while the gathering tears choked his voice, 'I wouldn't 'ave spoke. But she's my sweetheart, ma'am; and I couldn't bear that the shame should rest on her.'

"There was a moment's deadly silence in that crowded court. Everyone's eyes wandered towards the pale face of Mrs. Keeson, which, however, though almost livid in colour, expressed nothing but the most boundless astonishment. As for Mr. Keeson, surprise, incredulity, then furious wrath at the slander, could be seen chasing one another upon his handsome face.

"'What lie is this?' burst involuntarily from his lips as his fingers closed more tightly upon the heavy riding-whip which he was holding.

"'Silence, please!' said the Major with authority. 'Now, Cockram, go on. You say Mrs. Keeson spoke to you. What did she say?'

"'She seemed rather upset, sir,' continued Cockram, still looking with humble apology across at his mistress, 'for she only stammered something about: "Oh, it's nothing, Cockram. I only wanted to speak to my son—er—to Mr. Harold—I——"'

"'Harold?' thundered Mr. Keeson, who was fast losing his temper.

"'I must ask you, Mr. Keeson, to be silent,' said the Major. 'Go on, Cockram.'

"And Cockram continued his narrative:

"'"Mr. Harold, ma'am?" I said, "What should 'e be doing 'ere in the stables at this time of night?" "Oh, nothing," says she to me, "I thought I saw him come in here. I must have been mistaken. Never mind, Cockram; it's all right. Good-night."

"'I said good-night too, and then fell to wondering what Mr. 'Arold could have wanted prowling round the stables at this hour of the night. Just then the clock of St. Saviour's struck four o'clock, and while I was still wondering I fell asleep again, and never woke until six, when the mare was as sick as she could be. And that's the whole truth, gentlemen; and I would never have spoke—for Mr. and Mrs. Keeson have always been good to me, and I'd have done anything to save them the disgrace—but Alice is goin' to be my wife, and I couldn't bear any shame to rest upon 'er.'

"When Cockram had finished speaking you might have heard a pin drop as Major

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Laverton asked Mrs. Keeson to step into the witness-box. She looked fragile and pale but otherwise quite self-possessed as she quietly kissed the book and said in a very firm tone of voice:

"'I can only say in reply to the extraordinary story which this man has just told that the drug in the beer must have given him peculiarly vivid dreams. At the hour he names I was in bed fast asleep, as my husband can testify; and the whole of Cockram's narrative is a fabrication from beginning to end. I may add that I am more than willing to forgive him. No doubt his brain was clouded by the opiate; and now he is beside himself owing to Alice Image's predicament. As for my son Harold, he was absent from home that night; he was spending it with some bachelor friends at the "Stag and Mantle" hotel in Newmarket.'

"'Yes! by the way,' said the magistrate, 'where is Mr. Harold Keeson? I have no doubt that he will be able to give a very good account of himself on that memorable night.'

"'My son is abroad, your worship,' said Mrs. Keeson, while a shade of a still more livid hue passed over her face.

"'Abroad, is he?' said the magistrate cheerfully. 'Well, that settles the point satisfactorily for him—doesn't it? When did he go?'

"'Last Thursday, your worship,' replied Mrs. Keeson.

"Then there was silence again in the court, for that last Thursday was the day of the 'Coronation Stakes'—the day immediately following the memorable night on which the mare Cigarette had been poisoned by an unknown hand."

IV.

"I doubt whether in all the annals of criminal procedure, there ever occurred a more dramatic moment as that when so strange a ray of daylight was shed on the mysterious outrage on Cigarette. The magistrate, having dismissed Mrs. Keeson, hardly dared to look across at the trainer, who was a personal friend of his, and who had just received such a cruel blow through this terrible charge against his only son—for at that moment I doubt if there were two people in that court who did not think that Mrs. Keeson had just sworn a false oath, and that both she and her

"'Never mind, Cockram; it's all right. Good-night.'"

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son had been in the stables that night—for what purpose only they and their own conscience could tell.

"Alice Image and Charles Palk were both discharged; and it is greatly to the credit of Cockram that in the midst of his joy in seeing his sweetheart safe he still remained very gloomy and upset. As for Mr. Keeson, he must have suffered terribly at all this mud cast at his only son. He had been wounded in what he worshipped more than anything else in the world—his family honour. What was the use of money and the old estates if such a stain rested upon his name?

"As for Mrs. Keeson, public sympathy was very much overshadowed with contempt for her stupidity. Had she only held her tongue when Cockram challenged her, suspicion would never have fastened upon Harold. The fact that she had lied in the witness-box in order to try and remedy her blunder was also very severely commented upon. The young man had gone abroad on that memorable Thursday accompanied by two of his bachelor friends. They had gone on a fishing expedition to Norway, and were not expected home for three weeks. As they meant to move from place to place they had left no address: letters and telegrams were therefore useless.

"During those three weeks pending Harold Keeson's return certain facts leaked out which did not tend to improve his case. It appears that he had long been in love with Lady Agnes Stourcliffe, the daughter of the Earl of Okehampton. Some people asserted that the young people were actually—though secretly—engaged. The earl, however, seems all along to have objected to the marriage of his daughter with the son of a trainer, and on more than one occasion had remarked that he had not sunk quite so low yet as to allow so preposterous a *mésalliance*. Mr. Keeson, whose family pride was at least equal to that of the earl, had naturally very much resented this attitude, and had often begged his son to give up his pretensions, since they were manifestly so unwelcome.

"Harold Keeson, however, was deeply in love; and Lady Agnes stuck to him with womanly constancy and devotion. Unfortunately a climax was reached some days before the disastrous events at Newmarket. The Earl of Okehampton suddenly took up a very firm stand on the subject of Harold Keeson's courtship of his daughter. Some hot words were exchanged between the two men, ending in an open breach, the earl positively forbidding the young man ever to enter his house again.

"Harold was terribly unhappy at this turn of events. Pride forbade him to take an unfair advantage of a young girl's devotion, and, acting on the advice of his parents, he started for this tour in Norway, ostensibly in order to try and forget the fair Lady Agnes. This unhappy love-affair, ending in an open and bitter quarrel between himself and the owner of Cigarette, did—as I said before—the young man's case no good. At the instance of the Earl of Okehampton, who determined to prosecute him, he was arrested on landing at Harwich.

"Well," continued the man in the corner, "the next events must be still fresh in your mind. When Harold Keeson appeared in the dock, charged with such meanness as to wreak his private grievance upon a dumb animal, public sympathy at once veered round in his favour. He looked so handsome, so frank and honest, that at once one felt convinced that *his* hand, at any rate, could never have done such a dastardly thing.

"Mr. Keeson, who was a rich man, moreover had enlisted the services of Sir Arthur Inglewood, who had, in the short time at his disposal, collected all the most important evidence on behalf of his client.

"The two young men who had been travelling in Norway with Harold Keeson had been present with him on the memorable night at a bachelor party given by a mutual friend at the 'Stag and Mantle.' Both testified that the party had played bridge until the small hours of the morning, that between two rubbers—the rooms being very hot—they had all strolled out to smoke a cigar in the streets. Just as they were about to re-enter the hotel two church clocks—one of which was St. Saviour's—chimed out the hour—four o'clock.

"Four o'clock was the hour when Cockram said that he had spoken to Mrs. Keeson. Harold had not left the party at the 'Stag and Mantle' since ten o'clock, which was an hour before Alice Image took the drugged beer to the groom. The whole edifice of the prosecution thus crumbled together like a house of cards, and Harold Keeson was discharged, without the slightest suspicion clinging to him.

"Six months later he married Lady Agnes Stourcliffe. The earl, now a completely ruined man, offered no further opposition to the union of his daughter with a man who, at any rate, could keep her in comfort and luxury; for though both Mr. Keeson and his son lost heavily through Cigarette's illness,

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yet the trainer was sufficiently rich to offer his son and his bride a very beautiful home."

The man in the corner called to the waitress, and paid for his glass of milk and cheesecake, whilst I remained absorbed in thought, gazing at the *Daily Telegraph*, which in its "London Day by Day" had this very morning announced that Mr. and Lady Agnes Keeson had returned to town from "The Rookery," Newmarket.

[*It is at this point that you should close* THE ROYAL *and attempt to solve the mystery for yourselves.*—ED.]

V.

"BUT who poisoned Cigarette?" I asked after a while; "and why?"

"Ah, who did, I wonder?" he replied with exasperating mildness.

"Surely you have a theory?" I suggested.

"Ah, but my theories are not worth considering. The police would take no notice of them."

"Why did Mrs. Keeson go to the stables that night? Did she go?" I asked.

"Cockram swears she did."

"She swears she didn't. If she did why should she have asked for her son? Surely she did not wish to incriminate her son in order to save herself?"

"No," he replied; "women don't save themselves usually at the expense of their children, and women don't usually 'hocus' a horse. It is not a female crime at all—is it?"

The aggravating creature was getting terribly sarcastic; and I began to fear that he was not going to speak, after all. He was looking dejectedly all around him. I had one or two parcels by me. I undid a piece of string from one of them, and handed it to him with the most perfectly indifferent air I could command.

"I wonder if it was Cockram who told a lie," I then said unconcernedly.

But already he had seized on that bit of string, and, nervously now, his long fingers began fashioning a series of complicated knots.

"Let us take things from the beginning," he said at last. "The beginning of the mystery was the contradictory statements made by the groom Cockram and Mrs. Keeson respectively. Let us take, first of all, the question of the groom. The matter is simple enough: either he saw Mrs. Keeson or he did not. If he did not see her then he must have told a lie, either unintentionally or by design—unintentionally if he was mistaken; but this could not very well be since he asserted that Mrs. Keeson spoke to him and even mentioned her son, Mr. Harold Keeson. Therefore, if Cockram did not see Mrs. Keeson he told a lie by design for some purpose of his own. You follow me?"

"Yes," I replied; "I have thought all that out for myself already."

"Very well. Now, could there be some even remotely plausible motive why Cockram should have told that deliberate lie?"

"To save his sweetheart, Alice Image," I said.

"But you forget that his sweetheart was not accused at first and that, from the very beginning, Cockram's manner, when questioned on the subject of the events of that night, was strange and contradictory in the extreme."

"He may have known from the first that Alice Image was guilty," I argued.

"In that case he would have merely asserted that he had seen and heard nothing during the night, or, if he wished to lie about it, he would have said that it was Palk, the tout, who sneaked into the stables, rather than incriminate his mistress, who had been good and kind to him for years."

"He may have wished to be revenged on Mrs. Keeson for some reason which has not yet transpired."

"How? By making a statement which, if untrue, could be so easily disproved by Mr. Keeson himself, who, as a matter of fact, could easily assert that his wife did not leave her bedroom that night; or by incriminating Mr. Harold Keeson, who could prove an alibi? Not much of a revenge there, you must admit. No, no; the more you reflect seriously upon these possibilities the deeper will become your conviction that Cockram did not lie either accidentally or on purpose; that he did see Mrs. Keeson at that hour at the stable-door; that she did speak to him; and that it was she who told the lie in open court."

"But," I asked, feeling more bewildered than before, "why should Mrs. Keeson have gone to the stables and asked for her son when she must have known that he was not there but that her enquiry would make it, to say the least, extremely unpleasant for him?"

"Why?" he shrieked excitedly, jumping up like a veritable jack-in-the-box. "Ah, if you would only learn to reflect you might in time become a fairly able journalist. Why did Mrs. Keeson momentarily incriminate

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her son?—for it was only a momentary incrimination. Think, think! A woman does not incriminate her child to save herself; but she might do it to save someone else—someone who was dearer to her than that child."

"Nonsense!" I protested.

"Nonsense, is it?" he replied. "You have only to think of the characters of the chief personages who figured in the drama—of the trainer Keeson, with his hasty temper and his inordinate family pride. Was it likely when the half-ruined Earl of Okehampton talked of *mésalliance*, and forbade the marriage of his daughter with his trainer's son that the latter would not resent that insult with terrible bitterness? and, resenting it, not think of some means of being even with the noble earl? Can you not imagine the proud man boiling with indignation on hearing his son's tale of how Lord Okehampton had forbidden him the house? Can you not hear him saying to himself:

"'Well, by——the trainer's son *shall* marry the earl's daughter!'

"And the scheme—simple and effectual—whereby the ruin of the arrogant nobleman would be made so complete that he would be only too willing to allow his daughter to marry anyone who would give her a good home and him a helping hand?"

"But," I objected, "why should Mr. Keeson take the trouble to drug the groom and sneak out to the stables at dead of night when he had access to the mare at all hours of the day?"

"Why?" shrieked the animated scarecrow. "Why? Because Keeson was just one of those clever criminals, with a sufficiency of brains to throw police and public alike off the scent. Cockram, remember, spent every moment of the day and night with the mare. Therefore, if he had been in full possession of his senses and could positively swear that no one had had access to Cigarette but his master and himself suspicion was bound to fasten, sooner or later, on Keeson. But Keeson was a bit of a genius in the criminal line. Seemingly, he could have had no motive for drugging the groom, yet he added that last artistic touch to his clever crime, and thus threw a final bucketful of sand in the eyes of the police."

"Even then," I argued, "Cockram might just have woke up—might just have caught Keeson in the act."

"Exactly. And that is, no doubt, what Mrs. Keeson feared.

"She was a brave woman, if ever there was one. Can you not picture her knowing her husband's violent temper, his indomitable pride, and guessing that he would find some means of being revenged on the Earl of Okehampton? Can you not imagine her watching her husband and gradually guessing, realising what he had in his mind when, in the middle of the night, she saw him steal out of bed and out of the house? Can you not see her following him stealthily—afraid of him perhaps—not daring to interfere—terrified above all things of the consequences of his crime, of the risks of Cockram waking up, of the exposure, the disgrace?

"Then the final tableau:—Keeson having accomplished his purpose, goes back towards the house, and she—perhaps with a vague hope that she might yet save the mare by taking away the poison which Keeson had prepared—in her turn goes to the stables. But this time the groom is half awake, and challenges her. Then her instinct—that unerring instinct which always prompts a really good woman when the loved one is in danger—suggests to Mrs. Keeson the clever subterfuge of pretending that she had seen her son entering the stables.

"She asks for him, *knowing well that she could do him no harm* since he could so easily prove an alibi, but thereby throwing a veritable cloud of dust in the eyes of the keenest inquirer, and casting over the hocussing of Cigarette so thick a mantle of mystery that suspicion, groping blindly round, could never fasten tightly on anyone.

"Think of it all," he added as, gathering up his hat and umbrella, he prepared to go, "and remember at the same time that it was Mr. Keeson alone who could disprove that his wife never left her room that night, that he did not do this, that he guessed what she had done and why she had done it, and I think that you will admit that not one link is missing in the chain of evidence which I have had the privilege of laying before you."

Before I could reply he had gone, and I saw his strange scarecrow-like figure disappearing through the glass door. Then I had a good think on the subject of the hocussing of Cigarette, and I was reluctantly bound to admit that once again the man in the corner had found the only possible solution to the mystery.

*Next month "The Old Man in the Corner" clears up the weird and tragic mystery of the murder in Dartmoor Terrace.*

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A tall lamp with a heavy shade is easily overturned, and should never be stood upon a small table.

# FIRE!

*This Article Points out the Many Trifling Things that Bring about an Outbreak of Fire; the best Means of Guarding Yourself against Fire; and how to Escape from a Burning Building.*

By Captain Arthur Shean.

*Consulting Fire Brigade Engineer.*

It is a curious fact, that although fire is the most likely of all accidents to occur in a house, it is the one danger against which the average man or woman takes no sort of precaution.

Money is expended on bolts and bars in order to protect against burglars; workmen are immediately called in to repair a crack in the ceiling or a loose stair-rod—but fire! Who ever thinks of spending a penny on fire-appliances or of devoting a moment's thought to the discussion of what should be done by the various inmates of a house should an outbreak occur?

It is little short of amazing that such a state of affairs should exist; but that it does exist is undeniable. Ask yourself: have you the remotest idea what to do if a lamp suddenly fell in your bedroom, sending a sheet of liquid flame across the floor? If a fire breaks out in one of your rooms have you got to run and find a bucket, then rush to the nearest water-tap, turn the handle, fill the bucket, and stagger back with it to the fire; or have you thought of spending a couple of pounds on purchasing a portable hand-pump with which you could quench the flames in three minutes?

But enough of questions; they are apt to be rather embarrassing, aren't they? Let us turn to the discussion of means and methods.

First of all, with regard to lamps, perhaps the most fruitful cause of household fires in the Kingdom.

What is more common than to see a lamp placed on a table covered with a table-cloth? Yet it is about the most dangerous thing that can be done. By comes master five—years—old—slips, staggers, clutches wildly at the cloth and—well, imagine the terrible scene that follows.

Or again, some tidy person discovers that the cloth has slipped. He forgets all about the lamp, or, if he remembers it, he has straightened the cloth under like circumstances a score of times previously, so he gives it a smooth and a pull—the lamp is near the edge, or he knocks it with his hand, or it is violently jerked—and over it goes.

"Ah," says someone, "but we would never

Accidents are easily caused every year through lamps being placed on a table covered with a table-cloth.

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think of setting down the lamp on the big table; look here, we keep it on this little table all by itself—perfectly safe."

And they point with superior pride to a flimsy little, prettily-covered affair that anyone stepping back against would send flying in a moment.

No, no! If you wish to be safe, hang your lamps from the ceiling, or have them in brackets secured to the wall. Yes, and that leads to another source of danger. Lamps fastened to the wall by brackets or otherwise should on no account be attached by nails. A carpenter should first "plug" the wall with wood, and into this secure the lamp with screws.

If, however, you have a solid, clothless table which is not likely to be knocked over, and wish to stand the lamp on it, place it in some sort of dish with raised sides, in order to prevent the oil, should it be knocked over, from running all over the table and floor.

Another point which should be carefully attended to is to see that all lamps are filled and cleaned by daylight. To handle oil close to artificial light is the height of imprudence, and there is also the danger of filling the lamp, setting down the can uncorked, igniting

Never extinguish a lamp by blowing down the chimney. It may cause an explosion.

But first lower the wick, and then blow sharply from beneath.

the wick, and dropping a glowing match-head. It falls into the can and an explosion is the result.

But now, supposing that in spite of all precautions a lamp is upset and a stream of flame running across the carpet. Well, firstly, keep cool; and secondly, do not use water. This latter piece of advice cannot be too strongly impressed. Water will simply spread the flame, and should on no account be used.

Take up the hearthrug, fling it on the flames, and trample them out. If done immediately, practically no damage will be done, and the whole thing will be over almost as quickly as it occurred.

An even better extinguisher is sand. If a bucket of sand is kept somewhere handy near rooms in which lamps are used, any disaster caused by a lamp breaking or falling can be very easily overcome.

Finally, in this connection, there is a right and a wrong way of putting a lamp out. The right way is to turn the wick down low, wait till the flame begins to "jump," and then blow sharply from *beneath*. The wrong way, the way to cause an explosion, is to blow down the chimney.

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From lamps let us turn to gas—by no means so dangerous a form of illumination, but nevertheless a thing to be careful with.

It seems almost absurd to repeat in this article the old, old warning, to never look for an escape of gas with a light; but indeed, so frequently do such accidents occur, that the advice cannot be given too often.

A man awakes at night to notice "a smell of gas." Forgetting the time-worn admonition, he does the most natural—and the most foolish—thing in the world, strikes a light and goes out to look for it. Room after room he opens, peeps into and sniffs, until finally, on opening one door a terrific explosion takes place, and people, reading of it, wonder how the victim could have been so mad.

Yet it is a madness that may well come to you if you are not careful. On perceiving a smell of gas at night, search for it with your nose! If the smell seems no stronger in one room than another, open all the windows for a few minutes. On closing them you will soon discover the seat of mischief. This is almost certain to be a tap turned only half off. If, however, it is a hole in the pipe (and the same remedy holds good in case of a gas-bracket being broken off) plug it with soap. It is temporarily quite as effectual as plumbers' work, and you may sleep in safety.

Many fatal accidents are caused by people reading in bed by candle-light.

By far the safest plan, if you are in the habit of reading in bed, is to place the candle-stick in a basin of water.

When a lamp is overturned, and the carpet set ablaze, never throw water upon it. Take up the hearthrug and throw it upon the flames. It will instantly put them out.

Fires very often result from wall gas-burners in such little-used (or little seen) rooms as the scullery or washhouse. In these apartments it is a common thing for the economical housewife to say: "Oh, a globe is quite unnecessary in here; it would only be broken." And so a flaring, unprotected gas-jet burns merrily away until one day a towel or something swings near it, catches alight, and the house is perhaps burnt to the ground in order to save the cost of a wire globe—price fourpence.

It is, indeed, quite extraordinary how often people thus "spoil the ship for a ha'porth of tar."

Chimney-sweeping is another case in point. Many fires originate in the chimney, and originate there simply because the householder likes to "save" the cost of having it swept; grudges eighteenpence on this, the simplest of all domestic precautions against fire.

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And that leads to another point. Chimney-sweeping is a matter that should be superintended.

Your average sweep feels some obstacle in the way of his brush. He jabs savagely at it and effectually succeeds in removing it. Down comes half a brick. It goes into his sack with the soot; no one asks him any questions, and it is not for him (he thinks) to call any attention to it. So off he goes.

But that brick has been dislodged from one of the "beam-joists," and leaves a portion of unprotected wood. Every time the fire is alight this chars more and more, until one day it takes fire. Then, it smoulders on and on until something more inflammable is reached, and the house is on fire. The building is, perhaps, burnt to the ground, and no one has the remotest idea how the outburst originated.

Therefore, be careful to ask your sweep if any bricks have been dislodged during his work. If they have, or if a brick ever falls from the chimney — have in your builder *at once.*

When a chimney takes fire in the ordinary way, salt should immediately be thrown on the fire in the grate. This will put it out, and will also stop the draught which is rushing up and "fanning" the flames in the chimney.

Never leave clothes to air before the fire without a wire guard before it.

But the chimney is by no means the only point of danger in connection with fireplaces. There is the fire itself—to be reckoned with and looked after.

Every fireplace should have a loose fire-guard which can be slipped on to the bars when necessary. And it is necessary—at all events, it is wiser—to do so when a lighted fire is left in a room unattended. Nothing is more likely than for a live coal to pop out on to the carpet; a guard would prevent all danger of this. It should also be fixed when fires are just lit in the morning. Everyone is familiar with the cracking and spluttering which takes place; one day a piece of flaming wood is quite likely to jump out and set the whole place alight.

And again, clothes should on no account be left airing before the fire unprovided with a guard. Indeed, linen airing is always a risky proceeding, and should never be left long unattended.

Another frequent cause of household fire is the dangerous practice of reading in bed. Many are the fatal accidents which have occurred as the result of the reader falling suddenly asleep, leaving his candle burning by his bedside. During the night a restless movement causes the candle to be overturned by the bedclothes, and in a moment the bed is alight.

So avoid reading in bed, but if you must, let the candle be placed in a basin and stood at some little distance away. This precaution will insure safety during the indulgence of a dangerous habit.

At Christmas parties, where the little ones are clad in light, flimsy dresses, precautions should always be taken beforehand against the possibility of a little garment catching alight from a Christmas tree candle or the fireplace.

Before the children arrive, place somewhere handy a bucket of water and a rug. Should any accident take place you will have at hand the means to render the best possible assistance in the shortest possible time. Neglect this small precaution and a little child may be terribly, even fatally injured. Such things have occurred before now.

And now for some general remarks on the treatment of an outbreak of fire and matters relating thereto.

When the flames are discovered, shut all windows and doors in order to exclude draught; a wind of any sort will intensify a fire as much as a barrel of oil would.

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Should you one night wake up and find the house on fire, *first* put on your shoes.

A wet handkerchief tied over the mouth will enable you to pass through the suffocating smoke in safety.

Next, isolate the outbreak. That is to say, tear down all inflammable hangings, such as curtains, and remove such flimsy articles as papers, chair and sofa trappings, and so forth. Finally, extinguish the flames either by trampling them down with a thick rug, or by the constant and steady application of water (except in cases of burning oil).

If your own clothes catch fire, roll on the ground or wrap something thick around yourself. If another person is burning, envelope him in a rug or heavy coat.

The most terrible form of fire is, of course, that which takes place at night. On being aroused in such a case let your first action be to put on your shoes.

Next, remember that, so far as personal safety is concerned, smoke is far more to be feared than flames. It is an extremely wise plan to make a practice of keeping a handkerchief beneath the pillow at night. In the event of fire, dip this in the water and bind it firmly around your nose and mouth. This will effectually prevent your being overpowered by the smoke.

If it becomes necessary to pass through flames, empty the water-jug over a blanket. Wrapping this around your person you will be enabled to make a "dash" with comparative safety.

When almost overpowered with smoke, remember that it is often possible to breathe near the floor, when quite impossible to do so while standing upright. Drop, therefore, on your hands and knees and crawl.

Should it become necessary to escape by the windows, a sheet, or sheets knotted together (using a "reef-knot," beware of the ordinary "granny"!) can be used as a rope, one end of which can be secured to the leg of a bedstead.

A knot should be tied in one corner of the sheet, this carried round the bed-leg and bound firmly above the knot with anything that is handy, a scarf or tie, for example.

In conclusion, never lock your bedroom door, regularly examine all bolts and locks of doors and windows to see that they open easily, and—use that small amount of care and precaution necessary to prevent any likelihood of a fire ever occurring.

A word of advice regarding fire insurance may be of value. Although almost every householder possesses a fire policy, very few keep a complete inventory of the contents of their house. This is very nearly as important as the policy itself, for in the event of a fire no claim is paid that cannot be substantiated by a detailed list of all articles, furniture, clothing, etc., together with their value, that have been destroyed.

Many of the rules and suggestions given in this article, and several others, are clearly and concisely printed on a card drawn up by me, and published, and sent post free for *6d.*, by Messrs. Unwin Brothers, of 15, Queen Victoria Street.



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# THE NURSE-MAID'S UNDERSTUDY

By Una Hudson.

*An Afternoon of Unrest Capped by an Evening of Dismay.*

"Claudia," I said, "it's downright shabby of you."

Claudia buttoned her gloves with an air of decision and a silver glove-buttoner.

"Really," she said, "I don't see how it is to be helped. And, anyway, it's not you I feel sorry for; it's baby Harriet. There is no telling what you'll do to her before I get back."

"That," I said, "is insult heaped upon injury. I am entirely competent to take charge of any number of infants, and for an indefinite length of time. It's the principle of the thing; you promised me faithfully that if I would take an afternoon off to tidy up the garden you would stay at home and help me.

"I took the afternoon off—to be exact, I am taking it now—while you, Claudia"—I gestured impressively with the paint brush—"after letting both the cook and the nursemaid off for the afternoon, you tell me to look after the baby while you go to try on your new gown. I think you called it 'trying on,' Claudia."

"Don't be tiresome, Jack." Which is Claudia's polite way of telling me to "shut up."

"How was I to know that Miss Paul intended to send for me this afternoon? And I simply *must* go, for I want that gown for the Atwood dinner on Friday night.

"But if you would rather, Jack, you and baby Harriet may go along with me. You can hold her, you know, and keep her amused while I am being fitted."

Claudia made this preposterous suggestion with the air of one conferring a great favour.

"I'm awfully obliged," I answered hastily, "but, if it's all the same to you, I think I would rather stay at home."

I very greatly preferred that my initial performance as nursemaid should be conducted in strict privacy.

"Do try to behave yourself, Jack," Claudia said with her hand on the door-knob. "You know you have such a talent for always doing the wrong thing."

"I'll be all right this time," I promised rashly, and I skilfully manœuvred her into the hall and out at the front door.

Then I went back into the house to begin my career as nursemaid.

"If you were eight years old instead of eight months," I said, addressing myself to the young person who sat on the floor industriously chewing a rubber dog, "I would give you a spade and get you to help me. As it is, I really don't know what I am going to do with you."

The young person flourished the dog and gurgled sociably.

"Just so," I said, endeavouring to understand her untranslatable lingo. "You don't mind if I smoke?"

And I reached into my pocket and pulled out a cigar; with it there came a folded paper, at sight of which my memory woke up and I groaned aloud.

What was I to do? A just-remembered important engagement at my office, and a baby to care for at home, constituted a problem I seemed incapable of solving.

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And then I had an inspiration. Happy thought! I would get a messenger boy to look after the baby, and take them both to the office with me.

I rushed for the nearest telephone and demanded a boy—"a large, trustworthy boy, for I want him to carry a ba—er—that is, a heavy and very valuable package."

Being assured that the boy would be forthcoming, I returned to the young person with the dog, and proceeded to explain the situation.

"Your mother," I said, "might possibly regard this as an indiscretion, but I'll be there to chaperon you, so it'll be all right."

And then the messenger boy came.

He had red hair, and when I told him what I wanted him to do, that hair rose up slowly and formed a sort of halo above his freckled face.

"What, me carry that kid! Not 'arf!" And he backed away from the "kid," both hands waving an eloquent protest.

"I'll make it worth your while," I said craftily.

"How much?" The boy was unwilling, but evidently susceptible to argument.

"What's it worth to you?" I inquired guardedly.

He named a sum that was truly exorbitant, and I knew by the look on his face that he expected me to protest.

But I was desperate. "All right," I said. "Pick up the baby and come along."

"Half in advance," he insisted.

"You young Shylock!" I said in a rage, but I handed over the money.

The boy studied the baby with an air that was distinctly proprietary.

"I say," he ventured, "ain't that kid got a hat or something to wear on its head?"

I made haste to supply the deficiency in the small person's toilet—that is, to the extent of hunting up the cloak and cap I knew to be the proper thing when she went out.

I looked at the baby, and I looked at the diminutive garment I held in my hand, and I realised that I hadn't the faintest idea how to combine the two.

In desperation I appealed to the boy.

"Two shillings extra," he said.

I glared, but I acceded to his unholy demand, for I recognised my inability to cope unaided with the difficulties of the situation.

I balanced Baby Harriet unsteadily on my knee, and the boy laid hands, and not scrupulously clean hands either, on the little white cloak.

"Brace up, kid," he said, assuming the

"Don't be tiresome, Jack."

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lead, and I felt the weight of responsibility slipping from my shoulders to his.

"I say," he began, "where does her frock button, back or front?"

"Back," I replied, after a brief investigation.

The boy seized the young person's fat fist, and attempted to push it into the cloak. She resented such familiarity with a vigour that argued well for an irreproachable future.

The boy desisted.

"She wants her dear papa to do it," he said with a fiendish chuckle of glee.

And then it was that I realised what a truly superior person Claudia is. For I have seen her, simultaneously and with no apparent effort, conduct an animated conversation and make Baby Harriet and her outer garment one symmetrical whole.

The boy watched my struggles appreciatively, and his freely spoken, and more or less appropriate criticism did not tend to add to my serenity.

The result of my labour was not entirely satisfactory, but I made no comment. I didn't have to; the boy spoke for me.

"Her bonnet looks as if the wind had blown it on to her head," he remarked. "And, I say, what the dickens is the matter with her cloak? Looks as if she didn't know whether she was going backward or forward."

I entirely agreed with him, but I didn't say so.

"If you don't like it," I suggested sarcastically, "perhaps you would care to try it yourself."

He decided, however, to leave it well alone, and with my assistance succeeded in getting the baby into his arms.

"My word," he gasped, "how she wriggles. I'll drop her for certain."

"No, you won't," I said reassuringly. "All babies wriggle."

"Well, at any rate, pull down her clothes. They're up around her neck."

I rearranged the baby, and the boy announced himself ready to start.

"Take her inside," I said as we got into the 'bus. "I'm going to stay out and smoke. And don't you let her cry," I added sternly.

The boy grasped the baby despairingly.

"Yes, sir," he murmured in a tone of deep dejection.

He had become but a sorry imitation of his former aggressive self. The baby grabbed at his red hair, and the unwilling tears rose to his eyes.

I took pity on him and helped him to a seat, after which I climbed to the outside and smoked peacefully.

When we left the 'bus I read murder in the boy's eye, and he choked in an ineffectual attempt to relieve his feelings. Evidently the language at his command was painfully inadequate.

It was not until we were opposite a large, new building that he succeeded in expressing himself coherently.

"They keep babies in there," he said, and I detected a ring of hope in his voice.

"Yes?" I was mildly interested.

"They have trained nurses for 'em, and milk, and rattles, and little beds, and—and *all* the things kids like. It's called the 'Babies' Nursery,' and it's only just been opened."

I suspected that he was drawing largely upon his imagination, but the temptation to appear at my office babyless was very great.

I considered the matter.

"Is it a reliable place?" I asked temporisingly.

"Rather!" cried the boy enthusiastically. "If a kid's lost they'll give you a brand new one."

Claudia, I thought, might be unwilling to accept a substitute baby, but I decided to take the risk.

"All right," I said. "We'll leave her there."

And the boy heaved a sigh of relief so gustily that the ribbons on the baby's cap were blown about as though by a miniature cyclone.

I went in with him, and we found our way to a nice little room wherein were rows and rows of babies, presided over by two good-looking young women in white aprons and caps.

One of the women took the baby and gave the boy a large brass ticket, which he promptly handed over to me.

"I'm done with the job," he declared. "You'll have to take the kid home by yourself, mister."

But "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." And I doubted not that in some fashion I should be able to reach home with Baby Harriet.

Moreover, I speedily had reason to congratulate myself upon the final disposal of my infant daughter, for the man with whom I had my appointment, a bachelor, by the way, and unused to the ways of babies, had come up the lift with a woman and a crying infant, and he commented pleasantly upon the

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imbecility of people who brought babies to town with them.

It was late in the afternoon when I finished my business, and I very nearly had a nervous chill wondering what would happen if Claudia reached home before I did.

I rushed for the "Nursery" and presented my ticket to the white-aproned young woman, who identified my small daughter by means of a similar ticket suspended from her neck by a cord. Then she rummaged among a pile of lilliputian garments and offered me a cloak of a dirty mud colour, technically known, I believe, as "tan."

I refused it indignantly.

"Her cloak is white," I said, "with frilly stuff around the neck."

The young woman smiled a superior and unbelieving smile, and showed me the ticket attached to the mud-coloured cloak; it corresponded to the ticket on the baby's neck. But I was unconvinced.

"Do you suppose I don't know my own baby's cloak?" I demanded indignantly.

The young woman murmured a few words soothingly, to the effect that very few gentlemen did. She added that if I wished I was at liberty to search for the cloak I *believed* to be mine.

I thought of the bad quarter of an hour I was certain to have if I showed up at home with the mud-coloured cloak, and I chose the lesser of two evils.

I pawed over blue cloaks, and pink cloaks, and grey cloaks, and white cloaks. Ye gods! I inspected cloaks enough to clothe half the babies in town.

After fifteen minutes of agonising search I found the object of my quest and carried it triumphantly to the young woman, who insisted upon taking my address, "in case of a mistake."

While I felt that the worst of my troubles were now over, yet I was far from attaining my normal composure till I reached home and found Claudia still absent.

"The gods be praised!" I ejaculated fervently, and I hastily divested the baby of her outer wrappings and placed her in her cradle, where she was soon slumbering peacefully, the result, doubtless, of her strenuous trip to town.

Then I assumed my smoking jacket, slippers, and a placid air, as of one who had spent a peaceful if dull afternoon.

My preparations for her reception were barely finished when Claudia came in. As I rose to greet her I yawned elaborately and artistically.

"What a time you've been gone!" I grumbled.

Claudia dropped into the nearest chair.

"Such an afternoon as I have had!" she sighed.

"Ditto," I murmured *sotto voce*.

"That tiresome dressmaker," Claudia went on. "I thought she never would be through with me."

"My best thanks to the dressmaker," I murmured in an inaudible aside.

"You don't seem to have done much to the garden, Jack," she went on in her most business-like tone.

For a moment I was staggered. I had forgotten all about the garden.

"You forget," I said, recovering myself, "that I have been taking care of your small daughter."

I was lying beautifully. So pleased was I with the beginning I had made that I felt tempted to enlarge upon it.

"I am not a person to neglect a baby for a garden," I said virtuously.

"Of course not, dear," Claudia agreed. "It was sweet of you to stay in all the afternoon with little Harriet."

I felt that I had gained praise under false pretences.

"I hope she was good," Claudia added.

"She did not trouble me at all." Which, at least, was strictly true. "She is asleep now," I added, wishing to impress Claudia with my excellence as a nurse.

"I'll just have a peep at her—little dear," Claudia said, and walked over to the crib.

She gave one look at the occupant of the cradle, and a suppressed scream left her lips.

"Jack Armstrong," she gasped in a shaking voice. "*Where* is Harriet?"

"She's there," I said weakly and idiotically.

Claudia towered above me, righteously indignant.

"She is not," she asserted. "That is another child. Tell me instantly what you have done with Harriet?"

And then the whole horrible truth flashed over me.

I had, somehow, got hold of the wrong baby ticket. And, idiot that I was, I had insisted on having my own child's cloak, but had accepted the first baby offered to me.

And another child! Here was a pretty kettle of fish.

What could I do? What was I to say?

I stood for a few moments stolidly staring

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at the innocent occupant of the cradle and pretending to closely examine every feature whilst I puzzled vainly after some good explanation.

"What are you doing? Why don't you speak?" Claudia cried, impatiently, as I gently turned the sleeping innocent on its side and closely examined the back of its head.

"My dear, you must be calm," I managed to say. "You must be quite certain first that this is not Harriet. A mistake might so easily ——"

But Claudia stopped me with an angry gesture.

"John," sh said, "for goodness sake don't talk such nonsense. Can you suppose for a moment that I should mistake *that* for my precious, my darling little Harriet? What have you been doing? Is it a joke? Because, if so, it's an uncommonly stupid one!"

"No," I said. I could see no way out of the awful affair, and pulled myself together for the dreadful confession. "No, it's not a joke—I—I only wish it was. It's—it's a slight mistake, that's all. But it's easily put right—easily; we must go back, that's all."

"Go back! Go back where?" Claudia demanded.

"Why, to—to the baby emporium, the baby nursery, and see if they've got Harriet there."

"At a baby nursery? Jack, are you mad? What should my darling little Harriet be doing at such a place? A baby nursery, indeed!"

"I left it—her, I mean—there," I answered feebly. "It's—it's a place where they keep babies, play with them, feed them. Why," I continued, warming to my subject, "babies don't know what life is until they've been to the Babies' Nursery—that's what it's called—for an hour!"

"John," said Claudia, with terrible calmness, "will you please explain yourself immediately?"

I explained.

* * *

As I finished the hideous recital of my duplicity, and just as Claudia was on the point of dashing off to the Babies' Nursery, there came a knock at the door, and the maid entered.

"If you please, ma'am," she began, "there's a woman at the door with a baby as is carrying on furious and says as how you've stolen——"

She got no further. Claudia dashed past her, flew down the stairs, and, from the sound which floated up the next moment, I knew (and thanked my stars for it) that Harriet was once more in her mother's arms. But my troubles were not over yet.

She made no bones about giving me a piece of her mind.

"John," Claudia called, "bring this lady's baby down and tell her why you took it."

I did. The lady was one of those large, loud-voiced females, and she made no bones about giving me a piece of her mind.

When I went upstairs again Claudia laughed. "We're quits now," she said.

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# CATS ON CANVAS

By KATHARINE CHALDEES.

*Illustrated from Paintings by Madame Henriette Ronner.*

Madame Ronner in her studio.

***The Greatest Living Painter of Cats is Madame Ronner. You will Find in this Pretty Article Much that is Interesting about her Methods and her Charming Models.***

Of all the lovable little creatures in the world of animals none can compare with the dainty, frolicsome baby puss, with a face like a cherub, and movements the very embodiment of graceful activity. This little being, which seems always to be starting off in a scramble for somewhere, and stopping before it gets there, is altogether adorable and delightful as a pet.

No animal is more "paintable" if one has the patience for the work. But, unhappily, few artists possess this patience. In truth, Mme. Henriette Ronner, known and loved the whole world over for her pictures of mother cats and their babies, stands alone in her conquest of this most difficult and trying field of art.

For over sixty years, Mme. Ronner has painted kittens, and is still, at the age of eighty-three, busy with her fascinating work and study.

It was a long time ago — for Mme. Ronner has derived her income from painting since she was a girl of sixteen — that a stray kitten found its way into the old Dutch cottage where the artist sat at work. The little wanderer looked very forlorn and hungry, but purred sweetly its appreciation over the saucer of milk offered in tender sympathy, and straightway curled itself up for a comfortable slumber before the homely fireplace.

Within a few days the little stranger had developed into the prettiest, most frolicsome small parcel of fur and merriment that ever captivated a lover of animals—and this is the story of Mme. Ronner's first model for her paintings of kittens.

In the portrayal of these restless little creatures the painter has to overcome all the tremendous difficulties which beset him from the beginning. For kittens are never still except when asleep, or when held down by the maternal paw during the time for ablutions.

No other living thing is so changeable and variable in contour, expression, and markings, and the continual sprightliness of happy kittenhood comes as near a sanything to solving the problem of perpetual motion.

Family Peace.

However, Mme. Ronner seems to have surmounted

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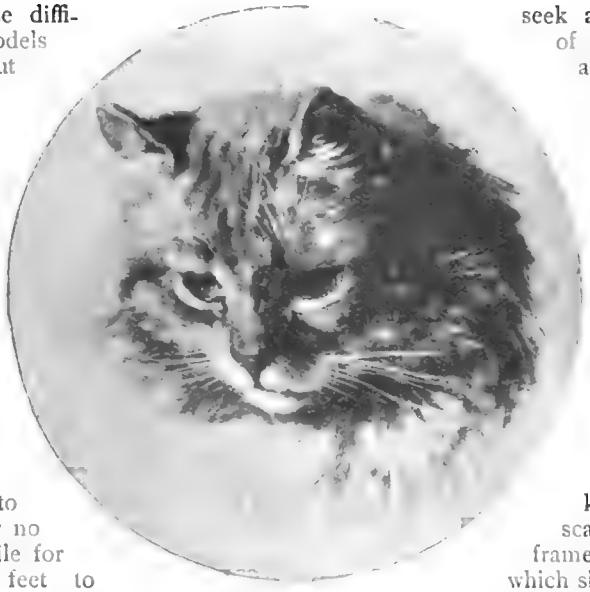
every one of these difficulties, for her models always frolic about on her canvas as if they were really there in person. They smile up at one like angels, or toss their saucy heads in defiance over wreckage of their own making. There is nothing too venturesome for these little creatures, no shelf too high for them to scramble on to, or no *bric-à-brac* too fragile for their soft little feet to explore.



Portrait of a young aristocrat.

On one occasion before making a painting of a mother cat and her babies, the artist procured some charming models. All went well for the first afternoon of their arrival, they being naturally subdued by their long ride across country; but the next morning, as the artist set to work, the kittens started off on a grand skirmish of investigation, leaving their mother to enjoy a quiet snooze on the hearthrug.

They chased one another from the top to the bottom of the window curtains; they scrambled on to shelves to play hide-and-seek amongst the busts of Greek gods and ancient warriors; they held high carnival amongst the array of paint-brushes that reposed for the artist's convenience in Delft jars about her easel; they made their way like squirrels up the legs of the old spinet to career wildly over the yellow keys, and even scampered up the frame of the easel, at which she sat working, and smacked their little paws on to the wet paint of the canvas.

This was really too much for Mme. Ronner's patience; she sent them scurrying into distant and less artistic quarters, and the next day they were packed off *en masse* to their former home. But that one morning's series of escapades served to furnish ideas sufficient for pictures of happy kittenhood for many a day after.

A long glass case, built on a frame some few feet from the floor, very often holds Mme. Ronner's restive little models, the

Three little cherubim.

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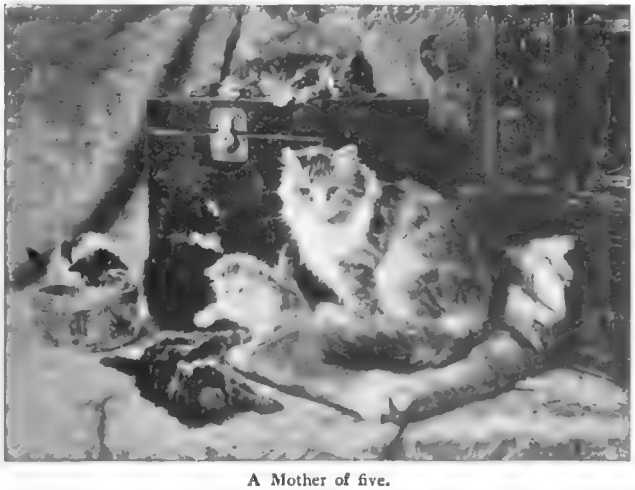
In the old armchair.

interior being fitted up to suit the picture settings.

The artist once painted an altogether delightful little group of kittens playing about a guitar and music leaves. One saucy little head was poked out through the aperture in the guitar. This really happened: Mme. Ronner once caught a kitten scrambling into a guitar hind-feet first, until nothing but her fluffy head showed outside the instrument.

Pinioned as puss was, the artist had a good chance of making her drawing, and eventually the little model fell off into tired slumber. She did not take at all kindly to being hauled out, as she fitted into the instrument very tightly.

On another occasion Mme. Ronner painted some Persian kittens having a lot of fun with a Dresden clock. The instrument had been placed for a moment on a table within reach of their inquisitive little paws, and they at once began turning somersaults over the new-found plaything, while their mother sat close by, smiling her approval. One of them managed to get at the clock-face, and revelled in the sport of making the hands go round with her tiny paws.



A Mother of five.

No other animals in the world are more interesting in what one calls "family life" than cats. The sedate and world-weary air of a mother cat surrounded by her rollicking offspring; the almost human manner in which she administers discipline

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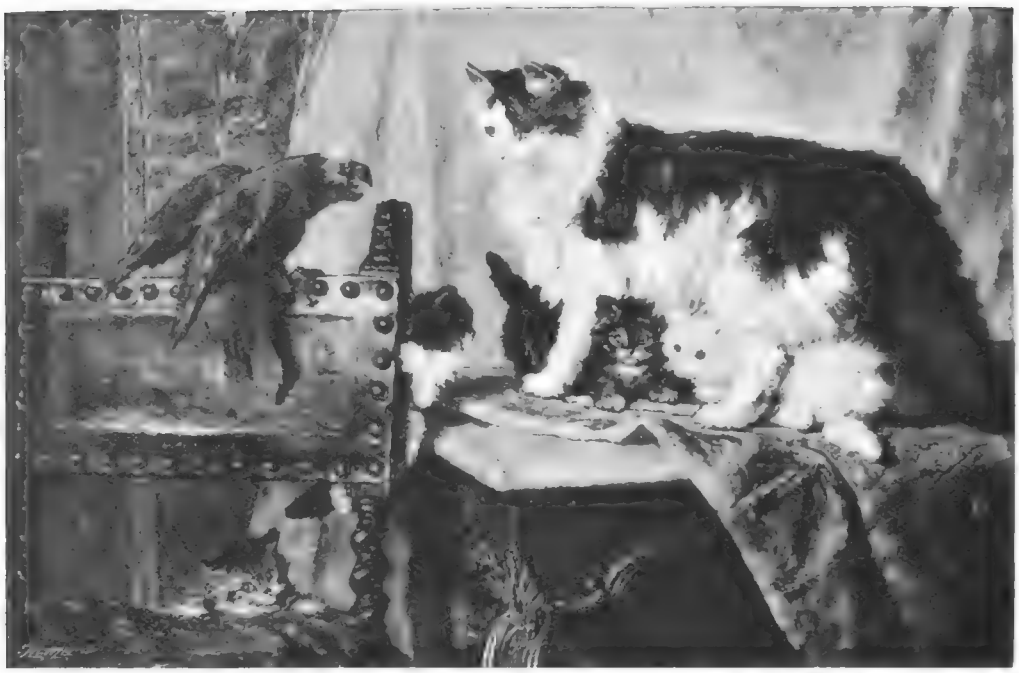


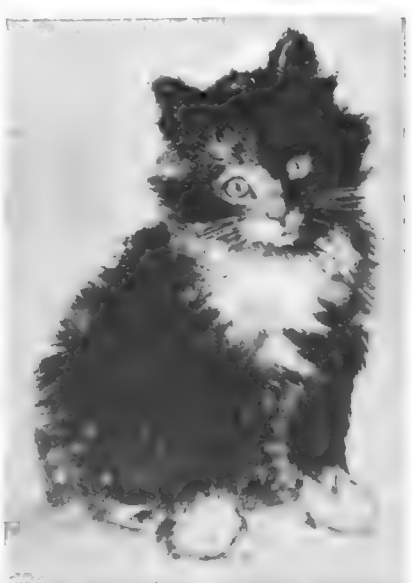
Such language to use before the children!

when they become too refractory; and the beaming way she sits, looking on at their youthful sportiveness, are altogether delightful to see.

Few animals show such maternal affection as a mother tabby. I have known one to stay for weeks beside an ailing little one, and to exhibit the most touching sorrow over its death. Anyone who cares to observe a mother cat with her babies will be struck by the tender motherliness shown in her eyes, and in her manner.

I have known but one mother cat who was not kind and affectionate to her kittens, and she was by nature both irritable and crotchety. Her kittens, in turn, cared nothing for their mother, which is quite unusual, for while they are always teasing the old mother cat, kittens also show the most charming fondness for her, kissing her face in the sweetest way imaginable, and hugging her until she calls out for them to stop.

The artist tells of an old tabby who once lost all patience with a tantalising little puss, and boxed its ears so hard that it cried out in pain. The mother's heart filled with remorse, and she gathered the little offender into her arms and began purring as hard as ever she could.



Fluff and Mischief

Standing on a table in the studio is a large geographical globe, and all the kittens that come to be painted take much delight in frisking about this wonderful ball, picking their way daintily round the narrow ledge of the protruding equator, and scrambling up the wobbly surface to the top. For years it has been much the worse for scratches, but that counts for little, as it has figured often enough in pictures to pay for a whole cargo of globes.

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"I should like to join in the fun, but I'm evidently not wanted."

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One little beauty who has appeared in many of Mme. Ronner's pictures, first as a fluffy kitten, and later as a sedate old tabby, had a passion for scents, and would bury its little pink nose in a bouquet of flowers with soft purrings of delight, and whenever the opportunity came, would jump on to the dressing-table to cultivate the scent bottle's acquaintance. If the artist wanted to send her into the seventh heaven of delight, she had but to spray violet water in her direction.

A most successful contrivance for amusing, and at the same time calling forth graceful play in a kitten, is to suspend a soft little ball from the chandelier to within a few inches of the floor. This the artist often does, and a kitten seems never to tire of lying on its back or jumping into the air while playing with this fascinating toy.

While living on a farm in Holland, Mme. Ronner had a very devoted friend in an old sedate tabby, who enjoyed nothing so much as to take long walks over the meadows in company with his mistress. He would always insist on carrying one of her paint brushes in his mouth. When they came to a resting place, or where the outlook was good for sketching, he would drop the brush at his mistress' feet.

This cat was really quite a born philanthropist, for he played the good Samaritan to all the unfortunate cats in the country round. He was always coming home accompanied by some dejected, forlorn-looking feline, with whom he would share his food, and look after in the most fatherly way until it was restored to health and spirits.

The artist was once quite in despair over a special sitter who was determined to run away at every opportunity. She belonged to a friend who lived quite four miles away, but the old cat cared nothing for great distances when a fit of homesickness came over her. She always managed to evade all watchfulness, and make her way across country to her loved abode.

Finally the artist thought to try a charm, quite as old as the hills, which is said to so please truant cats that they will never run away again.

This consists in the homely notion of putting butter on their paws, the theory being that as they are very fond of butter, they will take kindly to a home generous enough to supply them with it. Alas, the charm worked sad havoc in this case, for the tabby not only ran away from Mme. Ronner's, but she never returned to her old home again!

A new toy.

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# The Hawkins Burglar-Trap

*A Story of a Patent, and its Thorough Manner of Working.*

By Edgar Franklin.

Hawkins, the inventor, and his wife had been just one month in their new house.

My memory on that point is particularly clear, for the Executive Committee of the Woman's Rights Society met at Hawkins' home the very day they moved in officially; and the fear had been haunting me, more or less, that the next assembly of that body was to be held at my own residence.

Not that I am in any way unsympathetic as to women's rights and wrongs, and such matters; but when half a dozen women get together and discuss each other and a great many hats and similar things, the solitary man in the house is apt to feel——

At any rate, when I saw Mrs. Hawkins enter my door that evening, I secured my hat, mumbled a few excuses, and disappeared, to see how Hawkins was spending the evening.

The inventor himself answered my ring.

"Ah, Griggs," he remarked. "Committee talked you out of the house?"

"Something of the sort," I admitted.

"Glad you came in! There's something I want to—but hang up your hat."

"Hawkins," I said, closing the door, "why do you pay a large, overfed butler to stand about the premises if it's necessary for you to answer the bell? I'm not much on style, you know, but——"

"William! Oh, it's his night out," laughed Hawkins. "I believe the cook and the girls have gone, too, for that matter."

"Then we're altogether alone?"

"Yes," said the inventor comfortably, pushing forward one of the big library chairs for my accommodation, "all alone in the house."

"And it's a nice house," I mused, gazing into the next apartment, the dining-room. "That's a splendid room, Hawkins!"

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"Isn't it," smiled Hawkins, drawing back the heavy curtains rather proudly. Most of the little wrinkles are my own ideas, too."

"That sideboard?" I asked, indicating a frail-looking but artistic piece of furniture built into the wall.

"That, too—combination of sideboard and silver-safe."

"Safe!" I laughed. "You don't keep the silver in there?"

"Why not?"

"My dear man, anyone could open that door with a pen-knife."

"Admitted! But supposing your 'anyone' to be a burglar, he'd have to get to the door before he could prise it off, wouldn't he, Griggs?"

"Burglars do not as a rule find great difficulty in entering the average house," I suggested.

"Aha! That's just it—the *average* house!" cried the inventor. "This isn't the average house, Griggs. The burglar who tries to get into this particular house will wish that he had never been born."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, sir! The burglar that attempts a nocturnal entrance here has my sincere and heartfelt sympathy."

"Hawkins 'Patent Automatic Burglar Alarm?" I suggested.

"Oh, drop it! Drop it!" cried Hawkins. "Positively, Griggs, your efforts at humour disgust one. In some ways you're as bad as a woman. Go back and sit with the Executive Committee."

"What's the connection?"

"Why, the thing I expected to show you in a few minutes is the very same one which my wife fought against for two weeks before she let me put it into practice peacefully!"

"If it was an invention I don't blame your wife one little bit, Hawkins," I said. "I can see just how she must have felt about——"

"There's the evening paper if you want to read," burst out the inventor, poking the sheet across the library table.

Therewith he turned his back squarely upon me, and settled down to a book.

Hawkins was sitting near the window—in fact, his chair brushed the hangings. As I sat gazing pensively at the back of his neck a sudden breeze swayed the curtains above him.

There was an undue amount of swishing overhead it seemed to me. Something near the top of the window, and concealed by the hangings, rattled distinctly; simultaneously a gong struck sharply somewhere upstairs.

Hawkins whirled about, a most remarkable expression on his lately sullen countenance. As nearly as I could analyse it, it was a mixture of joy, excitement, and trembling expectancy.

"One!" he exclaimed.

The bell struck again.

"Two!" cried Hawkins. "By jove! That's——"

Crash!

Out of the curtains something dropped heavily upon the inventor.

For an instant it did not look unlike a grain sack, but there was something distinctly solid about it, too, for it dealt Hawkins a resounding whack upon his cranium before it rolled to the floor.

"Phew!" he gasped, sinking back into his chair and caressing the bump with an unsteady hand. "That—that did startle me, Griggs!"

"I shouldn't wonder," I smiled. "What on earth did you have concealed up there?"

"Aha! You'd never guess," remarked Hawkins, his ill-humour departed.

"No, I don't believe I should," I mused, staring at the pile of canvas on the floor. "Did the painters leave it?"

"They did not," replied Hawkins, coldly. "That, Griggs, is the Hawkins Burglar-Trap."

"Hawkins—Burglar-Trap!" I repeated.

"That's what I said," pursued the gentleman. "Possibly—now—it may not be past your understanding to grasp why I feel so secure about that flimsy little safe."

"I think I see. The burglar, presumably, comes in through window, is knocked senseless by your trap, and next morning you find and capture him as you go down to breakfast?"

"Nothing of the sort. Look here?" Hawkins picked up the affair.

As he grasped the end, the thing hung downward and showed itself to be a long canvas bag, fully large enough to contain the upper half of the average man. It was distended, too, by ribs, and appeared to be of considerable weight.

"There she is—just a bag, telescoped and hung on a frame above the window. The burglar steps in, the bag is released, drops over him, these circular steel ribs contract and clutch his arms like a vice—and there you are! How's that for an idea, Griggs?"

"Looks good," I assented.

"Moreover, the same spring which releases the ribs breaks a bottle of chloroform," continued the inventor enthusiastically. "It runs

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into a hood, and two minutes later the man is stretched out on the floor!

"Meanwhile the bell tells me what window has been opened. I ring up the police—and it's all over with the man who tried to break in."

"It sounds all right," I admitted. "Why didn't it do all that just now?"

"Just now? Oh—you mean—just now?" stammered the inventor. "Well, it did do it practically, didn't it? The window wasn't opened, anyway—it was the breeze that knocked the thing down. Furthermore, the ones on this floor aren't adjusted yet—they only came to-day.

"But upstairs they're all fixed—chloroform and all, ready for the burglar. I tell you, Griggs, when this burglar-trap of mine is on every window in London, there'll be a sensation in criminal circles!"

"Very likely. How much does it cost?"

"Um—well—er—well, it cost me about—er—twenty-pounds a window, Griggs, but——"

"Hush!" I cried.

"Was—was it the bell?" Hawkins whispered.

Ding! Ding! Ding! Ding!

The gong upstairs had chimed six times and stopped.

I stared at Hawkins, and Hawkins at me, and the inventor's countenance went white.

Far above, the evening calm was disturbed by a stamping and threshing noise, punctuated now and then by a muffled shout.

"There!" cried the inventor. There was a wealth of satisfaction in that one word.

"Well, somebody's caught," I said.

"You bet he is!" replied Hawkins, with a nervous chuckle. "Six bells—that's the top storey—one of the servants' rooms.

Bang! Bang! Bang! The intruder wasn't submitting to the caresses of the burglar-trap without a struggle. Also, from the volume and vigour of the racket, it was painfully clear that the intruder was a robust individual.

"Well," said Hawkins, still staring at me with a rigid smile.

"Well?"

"Well, we've got to go up there and capture him," announced the inventor, gathering himself for the task. "Come on!"

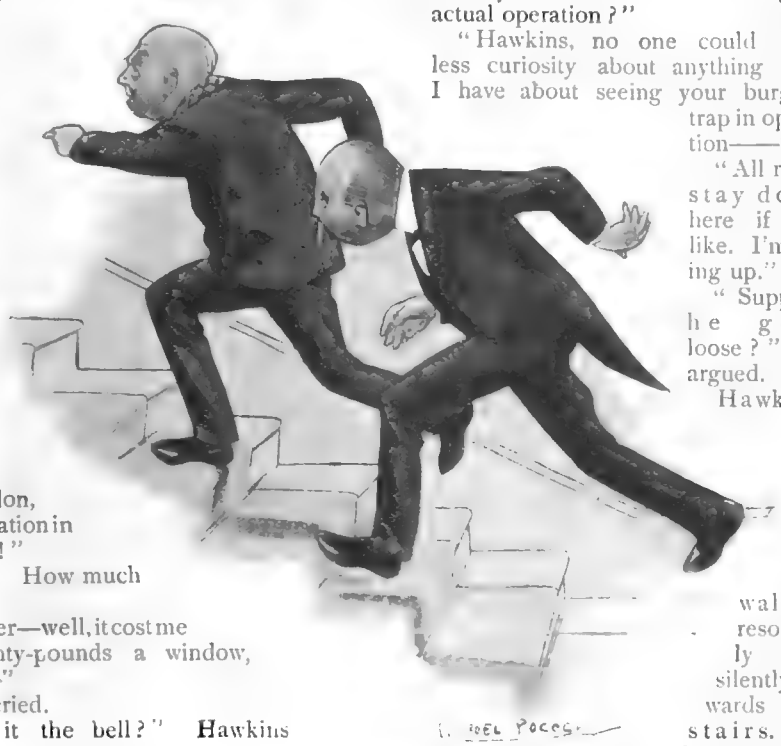
"Not just yet, thank you. We'll let the chloroform do its work first."

"But don't you want to see the thing in actual operation?"

"Hawkins, no one could have less curiosity about anything than I have about seeing your burglar-trap in operation——"

"All right, stay down here if you like. I'm going up."

"Suppose he gets loose?" I argued.



Curiosity bested my judgment. I followed.

Hawkins walked resolutely and silently towards the stairs. As for me, curiosity bested my judgment. I followed.

As we neared the top of the house the thumping and hammering grew louder and more vicious, and when we finally stood outside the door the din was really deafening.

"That's—that's either William's room or the cook's," said Hawkins with a slight quaver in his tones. "He's kicking, isn't he?"

"He certainly is. Let's stay here, Hawkins."

"No. I'm going in to watch it. He's not loose, that's certain."

Hawkins opened the door very gently.

Inside, the room was dark not pitch dark, but that semi-gloom of a town room

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whose only light comes from a street-lamp outside.

The air was reeking with chloroform. It made me feel quite giddy; but its effect upon the burglar was not apparent.

Over by the window a huge form was hurling itself to and fro, from wall to wall and back again, in the frantic endeavour to gain freedom. The bag enveloped his head and shoulders, but a mighty pair of arms within was straining and tearing at the fabric, and a couple of long, muscular legs kicked madly at everything within reach.

Every few seconds, too, a puffed oath added spice to the excitement, as the captive wrenched and strained.

On the whole, the scene was a trifle too gruesome to be humorous. As a rule I can see the funny side of Hawkins' doings; but the fun departed from this particular mess at the thought of what would happen when the collossus finally emerged from the bag and commenced operations upon Hawkins and myself — neither of us athletes.

"He's caught, isn't he, Griggs?" stuttered Hawkins, clutching my arm.

"For the moment," I replied. "But come—let's get a policeman. If that canvas gives——"

"Gives," sneered the inventor. "Why, that canvas——"

"Lord! If I gets yer!" screamed the man in the bag.

"Oh—great Cæsar!" gulped Hawkins. "It's—it's getting horrible, isn't it?"

"Aha! I heard yer then, ye cur!" roared the captive.

Hawkins' hand on my arm shook violently.

"We—we'll have to do something with him," he whispered. "What shall it be? We've got to subdue him, somehow or other."

"Why not let the chloroform work while we go out and get a couple of policemen?"

"Well, you see, it doesn't seem to be working, Griggs. Don't know why, but—phew! Did you hear that rip?"

I had heard it. I had also seen the silhouette of a long arm appear against the dim light of the window.

"By Jove!" gasped Hawkins. "It's given somewhere! We'll have to settle him now inside of ten seconds or—what the deuce shall I do, Griggs?"

"Take a chair and stun him," I replied. "That's all I can suggest. And, personally, I don't care for the job."

"Well, somebody's got to do something," groaned the inventor, seizing one of the bedroom chairs. "If ever he gets loose—I say, where are you going, Griggs?"

"Just in the hall," I said. "I'm going to light the gas and watch the battle from a safe distance."

Hawkins clutched his chair and stared at me like a man in a nightmare.

"D'ye suppose it'll kill him?" he choked. "Griggs, do you think——"

A long rip resounded from the darkness. A triumphant shout followed. Hawkins turned swiftly, raised his chair, and darted toward the man in the bag.

There was a crash, a shout, a dull blow, and a heavy fall—and just then I managed to light the gas.

Literally, I caught my breath and rubbed my eyes. For a few seconds the scene dumfounded me; but recovering myself I hurried into the apartment and struck another light.

Hawkins was stretched upon the floor

**Across the room, sitting against the wall, his large person decorated by sundry steel hoops and shreds of canvas, sat—William, the Hawkins' butler, staring dazedly into space.**

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groaning. His entire face seemed to have suffered violent impact with some unyielding body, and both hands covered his nose, from which the life-blood flowed freely.

And across the room, sitting against the wall, his large person decorated by sundry steel hoops and shreds of canvas, sat—William, the Hawkins' butler, staring dazedly into space.

Between them lay the chair.

"Oh, Griggs, Griggs, Griggs!" moaned the inventor. "Come quick! Get my wife! I'm done for this time! He's finished me!"

"Hawkins!" I cried, shaking him. "Did he——"

"Never mind him—let him escape," replied Hawkins faintly. "Just get my wife before I go. Good-bye, old friend, good-bye."

"Mr.—'Awkins," gasped the butler, his senses returning.

"*What!*" shrieked the inventor, sitting bolt upright; black eyes, swelled face, and all completely forgotten. "Is that you, William?"

"Yes, sir," stammered the man. "Was—was it you I hit, sir?"

"Was it!" yelled Hawkins, struggling to his feet. "Look at this face! What the blazes did you mean by it?"

"Beg—beg pardon, sir, but did you—did you sorter strike me with a chair, sir?"

"I—well, yes, William, I did."

"Well, I, not knowing of course as it was you, sir—I sorter hit back. But have you caught the thief, sir?"

"The what!"

"Indeed, yes, sir. There's one in the house. I was attacked here—right in this here very room. See here, sir, this bag? Just as I opened the window, he kem behind me, sir, threw it over my head, and tried to chloroform me, sir—you can smell it, sir."

"Yes. All right!" said Hawkins briefly, with what must have seemed to the man a strange lack of interest.

"You see, sir, whoever the rascal was, he must 'a' known as I intended going out this evening, sir, and that the house would be empty like. So in he sneaks from the roof, bag and all, and waits. And when I kem up the stairs, instead of going out, sir——"

"All right. That'll do. I understand," muttered Hawkins. "No one threw a bag over you. It was a new—er—sort of burglar alarm—just had it put up to-day."

"Burglar alarm!" cried the butler, staring at the remnants from which he was slowly extricating himself.

"Yes," snapped Hawkins. "And don't stand there mumbling over it. William!"

"Yes, sir."

"Here," said the inventor, "is a—er—five-pound note. You will immediately forget everything that has happened within the last half-hour."

"Yes, sir," responded the butler, with a wide smile.

Hawkins led the way downstairs. In the bathroom he paused to bathe his much abused nasal organ; and by the time he had finished my own features had had a chance to regain something like composure.

Once more in the library, which we had deserted some twenty minutes before, Hawkins threw himself rather limply into a chair.

"Well, well, well!" he muttered. "Now, who in the world would have dreamt of that?"

I forebore remarks.


# *A Wonderful Journey.*

***Count Vay de Vaya** may justly claim to be the most widely-travelled man in the world. He has visited, literally, every country on earth, and speaks no fewer than seven languages. He recently accomplished the remarkable feat of penetrating, on a mission connected with charitable and religious institutions, through the wilds of Siberia, from the Near East of Russia to the mysterious and romantic Far East, to which the eyes of the whole world are now turned. At Peterhof, near St. Petersburg, Count Vay de Vaya was accorded an audience by the Tsar and during his subsequent journeyings, he received a similar honour at the hands of the Emperors of China, Korea, and Japan. To have been received by these great monarchs, certainly four of the most unapproachable of the world's sovereigns, is a wonderful record: and the Count's diary of what he saw and heard in their little-known palaces, of what they told him, and of what they asked him, is of deep and unique interest at this moment. Count Vay de Vaya's diary is published just as he wrote it at the time in* **Pearson's Magazine,** *his audiences with the Tsar and the Emperor and Dowager Empress of China appearing in the April number, now on the bookstalls. The audiences with the Emperors of Korea and Japan will appear in the May number.*




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A genuine huntsman's dinner at which all the guests sat on horseback.

# PICTURE PARAGRAPHS.

*Have you Anything Odd in the Way of Photographs? If you have—no Matter whether they are Swiss, Dutch, Arabic, or Heathen Chinee—Send them to the Editor.*

### A BANQUET ON HORSE-BACK.

No more novel banquet can be imagined than that carried out by Mr. Billings, the Chicago millionaire.

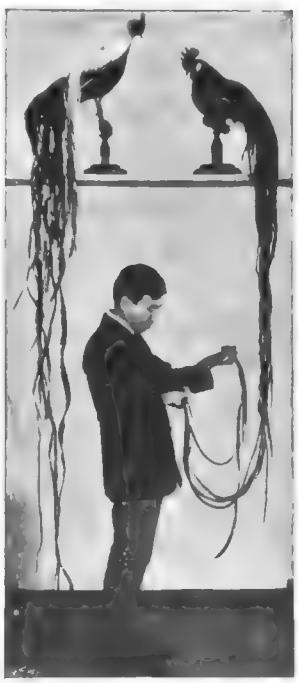
It took place in the open air, and cost twenty pounds for each guest.

The table-centre consisted of a bed of roses, bordered with greensward, and was laid in the open court of Mr. Billings' home.

When the thirty-six invited guests arrived, booted and spurred for the hunt, they were mounted on the same number of horses, the pick of the millionaire's stable.

Everything was carried out in regal style. The saddle-cloths were of white satin, on which was worked the monogram of the Equestrian Club. To each saddle a small table, two feet square, was firmly strapped, whilst a groom stood beside each horse to keep its table manners above reproach.

Needless to say, this strange banquet was a thorough success.



These fowls have tails from nine to twelve feet in length.

### JAPANESE FOWLS.

These fowls come from the village of Shinowara in Japan. No artificial means are adopted to make their tails grow to this enormous length—often over nine feet.

Sixteen is the average number of tail feathers, and it takes two years before they reach their greatest length.

Twice a month the birds are washed in warm water, and afterwards carefully dried on some high place, usually a roof, a man holding the tail until it is quite dry.

The two cockerels in the accompanying photograph were recently acquired by the New York Natural History Museum.

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Interior of a Malay theatre. There are no chairs, and the spectators must all take off their shoes.

### A MALAY THEATRE.

Like the Japanese, the audience before entering a Malay theatre must take off their shoes.

As there are no chairs they sit on their heels through the performance.

A Malay play is well worth attending, not on account of the acting, but on account of the delightful melodiousness of the language. It is soft and pleasing, and has been well christened the "Italian of the East."

On entering the theatre an advertisement of it is immediately handed to you. Here is the translation of one:

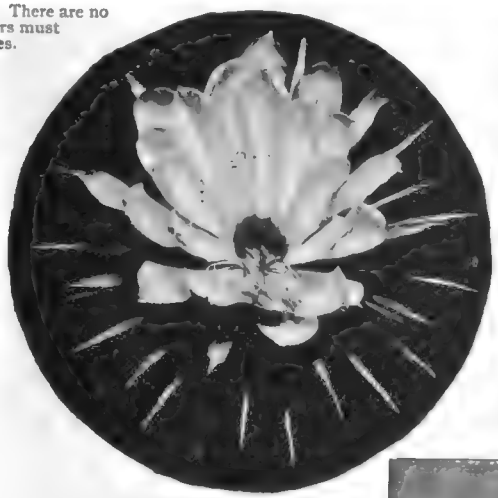
"Grand Gala Night. Come and see, come and see! The Empress Victoria Jani Pranakan Theatrical Company will perform on Tuesday. Ever Fresh, Ever New. The Most Simple and Attractive, and the Best Opera in the Malay Language.—Sha-Hirjan."

### A CURIOUS ICE "SWING" AT NIAGARA.

The illustration shows the effect of frost and snow upon a telegraph wire, which has broken from its fastening.

The accumulation of ice on the wire is over a foot in diameter at the heaviest point. It was caused by the spray from Niagara being blown by the icy wind on to the wire, and freezing instantly.

Naturally, the curious ice "swing" attracted a great deal of attention in the district, hundreds of people walking out to see the sight.



A flower of the night that blooms once in twenty years and only for one night.

### THE NIGHT-BLOOMING CACTUS.

This lovely flower belongs to the cactus family (*Cereus grandiflora*). It is a large plant that flowers once in twenty years. That is to say, in its natural state, for when kept in a carefully heated greenhouse throughout the winter it blooms more frequently.

The peculiarity of this cactus is that it opens out only at night. For one whole night it can be seen in all its loveliness. In the morning it is withered and dead.

To take this picture a watch had to be kept at night on the bud, in order that the opportunity of securing it might not be lost.

When it opened out the photograph was "snapped" by flashlight.

An electric light wire broken loose by the weight of the ice attached to it.

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# THE BISHOP AND THE ANARCHIST

By Ambrose Pratt.

*The Exciting Story of the Bishop whose Courage and Presence of Mind Saved the Emperor's Life.*

I.

"My dear," said Lord Alverton, glancing up somewhat suddenly from a letter he had been perusing, and looking across the breakfast-table at his wife, "His Imperial Majesty's private secretary warns us to be particularly careful in our selection of the domestics who shall attend us during the Emperor's visit."

Lady Alverton, a *petite* and very pretty brunette, shrugged her shoulders with a gesture of impatience as she responded: "How absurd of him, Ulrich! And how unnecessary! As if any of our servants could be an anarchist!"

"There will be the Scotland Yard men to prevent all possible unwarranted intrusion," replied his lordship vaguely. "And as for our servants—they are all English, and, one might say, bred in our service, except—Neroni." He paused, frowning.

"Neroni?" echoed the lady.

"Hum—ah! yes! That name makes me think. It is Italian, of course—and—he is——"

"The best footman we have ever had," interrupted Lady Alverton.

"We must be careful, my love. And one can't help remembering that the late Empress of Austria and the late King of Italy were both assassinated by Italians!"

"My dear Ulrich, will you condemn a race because of a rascal here or there? Neroni came to us with excellent recommendations. He has been here already over a month, and I must say that he is the most perfect servant I have ever had to do with. Everyone envies me his possession. Why, only the other day the Duchess of Burchester remarked on his distinguished manners."

"Well, well, my dear, you may be right. I haven't paid much attention to Neroni, I must confess; but—I do not particularly like his face. He is too—too foreign-looking!"

"Your insular prejudice, Ulrich! You should smother the tendency, or it will make you narrow-minded."

Lord Alverton got to his feet, and touched the bell. A footman entered almost on instant.

"You rang, my lady?" he inquired.

"No, I. Be good enough to send Neroni to my study," said his lordship.

"You are not going to dismiss him?" demanded Lady Alverton when the man had gone.

"I hope that such a course will not be necessary. I intend to ask him a few questions, however, for the sake of satisfying myself as to his *bonâ-fides*."

The lady smiled. "I would not lose him for anything," she said. "If he left us Mrs. Darrington would snap him up immediately, and I don't want her to score at my expense—she is such a cat. And good servants are so hard to get," she added regretfully.

"I quite agree with you, my dear," he replied—and husband and wife left the room together.

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The moment they had disappeared a dark-skinned and extremely handsome man darted out from the table at which Lord and Lady Alverton had been seated. He was dressed in the conventional livery of a footman, and his raven-black hair was thickly powdered. Scrambling noiselessly to his feet, he seized a tray from a sideboard, and, placing it upon a table, began to cover it with dishes, cups, and saucers. When the tray was full he took it up, and hurried to the door. In the passage without he came face to face with the footman whom Lord Alverton had directed to find Neroni.

"Hullo, Nero!" said the fellow jovially. "I've been looking for you everywhere. The master wants you in his study. Better give me that tray and go to him at once."

"So! So!" replied Neroni. "What can he want with me, I wonder?"

His tones were soft and liquid; but, though his enunciation was perfect, a foreign accent was distinctly noticeable.

"Dunno," replied his brother servant, with a grin, taking the tray as he spoke—"unless it's to give you the sack."

"I shall hope for a better fate," rejoined Neroni; and, bowing gravely to the other, he swung on his heel, and marched up the corridor—his every movement a revelation of grace.

Tapping at a certain door, he turned the handle, and entered a large and luxurious room, furnished as a combined smoking-room and library.

Lord Alverton was standing before the fire, lighting a cigarette.

Neroni, made aware of his master's occupation by one swift glance, waited, motionless as a statue, gazing straight before him.

Lord Alverton sent three meditative smoke-wreaths curling and twisting against the mirror that rested on the mantel. He then blew out the match, cast it into the grate, and turning, looked Neroni deliberately in the face.

The footman withstood the inspection with rock-like impassivity, and not by the slightest twitch of any feature or change of

**"One can't help remembering that the late Empress of Austria and the late King of Italy were both assassinated by Italians."**

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**"You are not by any chance an anarchist or nihilist, Neroni?"**

"Who was your last employer?"

"Her Grace the Duchess of S——."

"Hum! She is now travelling in America. Before that, Neroni?"

"The Marquis of Montalembert."

"Who is now trying to reach the North Pole. And still further back, Neroni?"

"The late Lord Chudleigh."

"Who died three months ago—a childless widower. It's a curious coincidence, Neroni, that *all* your old employers should be so—ahem—out of the way."

"I have letters, milord," said Neroni quietly.

Lord Alverton yawned. "Letters can be forged," he observed—"not that I wish to imply that yours are. You are doubtless aware that His Imperial Highness the Emperor of —— contemplates paying me the great honour of a short visit presently."

"Yes, milord."

expression did he betray impatience or uneasiness.

A full minute passed. Lord Alverton then gently shrugged his shoulders.

"What is your baptismal name, Neroni?" he asked languidly.

"Luigi, milord," replied the footman, without moving an unnecessary muscle.

"Ah, indeed. And where d'ye come from, Neroni?"

"Naples, milord."

"Born there?"

"Yes, milord."

"Have you been long in England?"

"Twelve years, milord."

"How long have you been at service?"

"Always, milord."

"He will arrive here the day after to-morrow."

Neroni slightly raised his eyebrows, and his mask-like face assumed an expression of polite interest. "So soon, milord?"

"Yes, and naturally I do not wish any accident to occur to him while he is my guest. You are not by any chance an anarchist or nihilist, Neroni?"

The footman's fine lips twisted in an ironical smile. "No, milord," he answered.

"I'm sure of that," said Lord Alverton, with ingenuous heartiness. "I did not ever think you were, but I had to make certain, for my responsibility is great. Here, my man, take this."

Slipping his hand into his vest pocket he

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extracted a piece of gold and offered it to the Italian. Neroni started, and for the first time in the interview his immobility deserted him. His face flushed, his eyes glittered, and for one second he appeared about to reject the proffered gift with passionate disdain. The next, however, he bowed his head and meekly accepted the money.

"A thousand thanks, milord!" he muttered huskily, and, with many reverent inclinations, he made his exit, backing slowly to the door as though taking leave of royalty.

II.

The house-party invited by Lord Alverton to meet His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of —— at Septon Castle, the historic home of the Alvertons, was a small but eminently-distinguished one. It consisted of Lord Beaton, an ex-Prime Minister and his wife, the Duke and Duchess of Blaxland, the Earl and Countess of Isley, that famous beauty and wit the Hon. Mrs. Durham, and last—but not least (in any respect)—the Right Rev. Dr. May, the Bishop of a British colony, then paying a visit to the motherland.

An hour before lunch on the day after the arrival of the Emperor Lord Alverton's other guests were assembled in the library waiting for His Majesty to appear. Conversation was conducted in decorously-hushed tones, for it was known that the Emperor was engaged in correspondence with his secretary, although afar off.

"For such an absolute autocrat as he undoubtedly is," murmured the Duke of Blaxland to the Countess of Isley, "I consider the Emperor a singularly mild and unassuming person."

"His manners are exquisite," whispered the Countess.

"You went to school with him, Alverton—did you not?" muttered Lord Beaton.

"I had the honour to be his fag," replied the host.

"Was he popular with the boys?"

"Well—er—not exactly. I liked him extremely. But then you see he unbent to me as I was English. With the other fellows I must confess he was rather stiff—and you know how essentially irreverent and democratic schoolboys are?"

"And quite right too," said the Prelate, in tones so loud that everybody jumped and looked shocked. "The pity is that they ever grow out of an attitude so manly and independent. There is nothing more detestable to me than the mask of cringing servility which is assumed by most people when addressing those whom the accident of birth has placed exaltedly. By so doing they both advertise their own littleness of spirit and deliberately prolong the conditions that enable tyranny and slavery to exist. Men are born equal, and die equal. It rests with themselves to live equal."

Excited by his declaration of opinion, the Bishop stood squarely on his feet, and, putting his hands behind his back, surveyed his audience with a look of defiance.

Facing him, but behind the others, and standing in the open doorway, was Neroni, Lord Alverton's Italian footman. He held a salver in his hand whereon was a letter. He had evidently overheard the bishop's speech, and just as evidently he agreed with the precepts therein enunciated. His usually immobile face was warmly flushed, his eyes glowed brilliantly, and he gazed at Dr. May with a look of intense and enthusiastic admiration.

The Prelate caught that glance, and it pleased him—the more, perhaps, because the rest of his audience was at daggers-drawn with him.

"What a terrible theory!" exclaimed the Duchess. "Who would have thought that you were such an anarchist, my lord?"

"You would cause a revolution if you preached such doctrines here," murmured Lady Isley.

"The only true Radicals are aristocrats and —bishops," drawled Mrs. Durham. "I have always said that if you want to hear really revolutionary speeches go to the House of Lords."

"I'm afraid we made a mistake in asking Dr. May here," whispered Lord Alverton to his wife.

"Don't you believe in the divine right of kings, my lord?" asked Lady Beaton, with a plaintive smile.

The Prelate's lip curled.

"I do, madam," he answered stoutly—"in their divine right to set an example to their subjects in the practice of virtue. But I call that right a duty, and I hold that any monarch who transgresses it is unworthy of his kingly office."

The assembly at that instant was startled by a sharp ejaculation that proceeded from the door behind them. Neroni, carried away by the Prelate's remarks, had uttered an irrepressible cry; but Dr. May alone saw the look of joy that transfigured his face, accompanying his exclamation. When the others turned they merely saw the footman

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stooping to pick up the letter that, in his agitation, he had dropped to the floor. His face as he recovered his erect position was perfectly emotionless.

"Ha! Neroni," said Lord Alverton, "a letter! For whom?"

"For you, my lord!"

Lord Alverton tore open the envelope, glanced quickly at its contents and then proudly about him. "My friends," he announced, "the Emperor will dine with us this evening as plain Baron H——, and he wishes his incognito to be strictly observed."

"How sweet of him!" chorused the ladies.

III.

While he was dressing for dinner that evening the Bishop was disturbed by a faint tapping on the panels of his bedroom door. He fancied himself mistaken at first, but presently the sound grew louder.

"Come in!" he said.

Neroni entered, and shut to the door behind him. The handsome Italian wore an expression of mysterious resolution. His face was pale, and he seemed rather ill-at-ease.

The Prelate observed these signs of perturbation at a glance. Suspending his occupation—he had been struggling with a refractory collar—he looked seriously at his visitor, and said, "Well, my friend?"

"I—I have come to your lordship," stammered Neroni, "to beseech a favour at your hands." His voice as he proceeded grew bolder, and its quavering articulation ceased. "I may say that I have been emboldened to make my prayer by your lordship's utterances, which I could not help overhearing this morning."

"Oh, what utterances do you refer to?"

"Concerning the equality of mankind."

The Prelate nodded.

"The truth of what I said appealed to you?" he asked softly.

"Ah, indeed yes, my lord."

The Bishop frowned, and demanded sternly:

"Then why on earth do you approach me with such words as 'beseech' and 'prayer'? If you believe yourself my equal, as unquestionably you are, ask of me what you wish, and if it is right for me so to do I shall fulfil your request."

Neroni smiled and bowed, and the Prelate noticed that his graceful inclination contained no trace of unnecessary reverence.

Mollified, he smiled also, and questioned, "Well?"

"My lord," said Neroni with solemn dignity, "at the inn of the village of B——, three miles from here, my only brother is now lying at the point of death. There is no priest in the neighbourhood, and unless you consent to visit him immediately he will die."

"Of what is he dying?" asked the Bishop, looking full into Neroni's eyes.

"An accident, my lord. He fell from a great height, and was wounded fatally. An hour since a messenger arrived from the doctor who attends him to tell me that he is sinking fast and that he is craving a clergyman."

"Very good, Neroni," said the Bishop. "Order a carriage, and get ready to accompany me; we shall start immediately."

"But—but—I—I—cannot go with you, my lord," stammered Neroni. "Lord A. has especially directed me—to—to wait at table—this evening on—His Majesty."

The Prelate pursed up his lips and shrugged his shoulders. "Hum!" he observed. "I forgot the Emperor—he dines with us to-night, of course. Hum—hum! It would be a piece of unpardonable discourtesy to my host to absent myself on any pretext, especially after what I said to the others this morning. Let us see. It is almost eight now. Attend to me, Neroni. Have a carriage made ready at once and kept waiting. I shall go in to dinner, meet the Emperor, and very soon—within a few minutes—make an excuse to leave. Indeed, I shall announce the real reason of my departure. Well, what are you waiting for? Off with you!"

Neroni put up a hand that noticeably trembled to his forehead, and, although peremptorily addressed, he stood for a moment in deep irresolution. "It will be too late if you go in to dinner!" he said at length in a hollow voice.

"Nonsense, my man! the horses can make up the lost time. I shall make the coachman drive fast."

"Too late," repeated Neroni. "You could not leave under half an hour."

"I shall leave in ten minutes, I tell you!" protested the Prelate angrily.

"Don't go in to dinner, my lord!" cried Neroni, falling on a sudden to his knees. "Ah, go at once to my brother! I adjure you in the name of your holy calling!"

His manner was so passionately earnest, his attitude and expression so wild and abandoned, that the Bishop, profoundly moved, was about to grant the prayer addressed to him when at that instant a

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distant chime of gongs sounded through the house.

"There is the assembly-bell," said the Prelate. "Go, my man, and prepare the carriage. I shall have paid my respects to the Emperor and made my excuses to your master before it is ready. Courage, Neroni! By God's grace I shall see your brother before he dies."

Neroni sprang to his feet, and hurried to the door. From the threshold he threw at the Prelate an indescribable look of rage and resignation, contempt and pity.

"Too late!" he muttered, and passed out.

The Bishop hastily completed his toilet, but as he dressed he was haunted with the memory of Neroni's eyes as they had gazed at him in that last momentary glance, and he was still thinking of Neroni as he descended the stairs.

"Plague on the fellow!" he reflected. "If he is so marvellously attached to that dying brother of his, as he seems, why does he not go to him himself? The excuse he made is paltry. Now, I wonder——"

The Prelate's musings came to an abrupt termination, for at that juncture he entered the assembly-room, and was immediately addressed by his host. It is sad to relate that in the excitement of being presented to, and conversing with, the great king his lordship absolutely forgot his promise to Neroni.

Not until he had already partaken of soup and *hors d'œuvres* was it in fact recalled to his mind, for in the interval he had been drawn into a discussion dear to his heart with no less a person than the Emperor, in which he had victoriously defended the merits of certain Rhenish wines.

It should be stated that the Bishop was a connoisseur of wine. Quite by chance, while throwing back his head the better to enjoy a draught of some excellent Meisesinge that had already pointed one of his arguments, he encountered a glance directed at him by Neroni, who stood behind Lady Alverton's chair. Neroni's brows were joined in a frown, and his expression was contemptuous and almost menacing.

The Bishop remembered his appointment with a shock of contrite self-humiliation.

"Goodness gracious!" he exclaimed, involuntarily aloud, "What a wretched memory I have!"

As he spoke he put down his glass and got to his feet. The whole table stared at him in astonishment, and for a moment, during which the now-flustered Prelate wiped his lips with his serviette, conversation was suspended, and the former buzz of talk gave place to a period of almost perfect stillness.

The silence would have been absolute were it not for the ticking of a clock—a sound so slight that it was only rendered noticeable by the sudden lull. Apparently it issued from a magnificent *épergne* composed of several solid gold dishes containing flowers that were arranged about the centre of the table in such a fashion as to represent the Emperor's coat-of-arms.

The Bishop's perturbed attention was arrested by the sound. It reminded him of the passing time, and made him wonder how long he had neglected his promise and whether he would reach Neroni's dying brother too late to administer to the poor wretch the sacraments and consolations of his religion. These thoughts flitted through his mind with the speed of light, and they did not at all interfere with his resolution to make his excuses and depart.

But because of them he tried to do two things at once—to make his excuses and satisfy his curiosity. Clearing his throat, he began to address his hostess in a little apologetic speech; but his eyes were examining the *épergne* in quest of the clock that ticked, so that he might inform himself of the exact hour.

"I feel sure that you will of your charity forgive me and permit me to depart," said the Bishop, "in consideration of the sad errand on which I am bidden. I—I—beg—I——"

The speech concluded abruptly, for the Bishop's eyes, unable to discover the clock for which they were searching, had, nevertheless, encountered the outlines of an object that rested, partially concealed by flowers, in the cup of the largest and most central vase.

The shape of this object inspired the Prelate with a sentiment resembling fear. He gazed at it steadfastly for a few seconds, changing colour as he remembered that he had seen objects of a similar size and contour quite recently in the criminal museum of the Parisian Police.

He raised his head, and looked at Neroni, who still stood behind Lady Alverton's chair

The Italian's face was grey and rigid. His sharp, white, upper teeth were buried in his lower lip, and his eyes were glowing like coals. The Bishop, gazing into those eyes, read there so terrible a confirmation of his half-formed suspicions that he uttered an inarticulate cry of horror and fell to trembling like a leaf. He wanted to do many

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things, but his muscles were temporarily paralysed with shock, and refused to obey his will. It was as though he had been hypnotised by Neroni's glance. The voice of Lady Alverton aroused him as from a trance.

"What is the matter, my lord. Are you ill?"

The Bishop tore his eyes from Neroni's face, and was instantly blessed with an exulting consciousness of returning power. Moreover, he knew what was required of him by fate to do, and how to do it. Bending forward, of a sudden he stretched across the table and caught up the central vase of the *épergne*.

Utterly unheeding the buzz of exclamatory questions his action evoked, he overturned his chair with a single backward kick, and, quitting the table, marched swiftly down the room, holding the vase carefully between both hands at arm's length before him.

Pausing at last beside a great window at the farthest end of the saloon that overlooked the castle moat, he raised the vase above his head, and sent it crashing through the pane.

Turning then, he surveyed the startled occupants of the table, who stared at him in dumb-stricken amazement. Their expressions brought a smile to his lips, but his glance soon travelled beyond them and rested on Neroni. The Italian gave him look for look, but the Bishop quickly realised a fresh danger. Neroni was fumbling in his pockets, and moving stealthily backwards in the direction of the Emperor.

With an agility astonishing in a man so large and portly the Bishop gave a sudden spring, and, traversing the room with one swift rush, hurled himself upon the treacherous footman. There was a flash of steel, and a dagger was buried in the woodwork of the Emperor's chair. Next second Neroni was lying upon the floor, stunned and insensible, felled there by a blow delivered with the full force of the Prelate's strong right hand.

There followed a grinding crash of chairs, and in an instant everyone was afoot, white-faced and trembling.

"What does this mean?" demanded the Emperor.

"It means," replied the Bishop, facing him with an indulgent smile, "that God has permitted me, his unworthy instrument, to save your Majesty's life and, indeed, the lives of all here. This man"—he pointed at Neroni—"is an anarchist. He undoubtedly employed himself in your service, Lord Alverton, solely with the purpose of attempting this dastardly outrage, and but for the happy chance that made me wish to know the time, and which immediately attracted my attention to a peculiar clock-like ticking on the table, you would all have perished by a horrible death. In the vase which I threw just now into the moat he had concealed a bomb. But listen!"

He raised his hand impressively for silence, and, turning, gazed at the shattered window through which he had cast the vase.

A breathless pause ensued, during which those present stared questioningly at each other and heard only the beating of their own hearts. Perhaps a minute had elapsed when, without warning, the silence was broken by the noise of a terrific explosion. The stout stone walls of the castle shivered and rocked, the floor heaved and swayed; then came a great rush of air, bearing in its train a curiously-searching, overpowering odour, and a second later the screams of women mingled with the sound of falling splintered glass. The bomb had exploded in the moat.

In the midst of the confusion the Bishop, startled by a sudden thought, swung round and looked at Neroni. The anarchist was awake, and reclining on one side, the upper part of his body propped up on his left arm. He was quietly drinking the contents of a little phial that with his right hand he held to his lips.

The Bishop hurried to his side, and, stooping, snatched the bottle from his grasp.

"You are too late," said Neroni. "I have taken poison, and in ten minutes I shall be dead. I wished to save your life. I did my best, and in return you ruined me!"

"Then the story of your dying brother was an invention?"

"Yes!"

"God forgive you!" gasped the Prelate. "Why did you wish to save me?"

"Because those words I overheard you speak to-day befooled and bewitched me. You made me believe that you considered the tyranny of monarchy hateful. For this I resolved to spare your life, I tried to get you from this room to my dying brother"—he laughed derisively—"but your memory failed you. The sight of the banquet drove all thoughts of him out of your head. You forgot him completely, and in doing so frustrated all my plans. Curse you! Curse you! Curse you! What made you utter such lying words?"

The Bishop for answer fell on his knees beside the anarchist and began to pray.

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**Next second Neroni was lying upon the floor, stunned and insensible.**

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# MR. —HIS PAGES.

*I puzzle and I mystify,*
*I turn about and twistify,*
*I simply heaps of fun supply,*
*For I am Mr. X!*

*If you can read my pages o'er,*
*Without at least ten laughs or more,*
*You must be what the Scotch call dour,*
*Or I'm not Mr. X!*

Puzzle Penknives will be given as prizes to readers who forward new puzzles, problems, and other tricks which are inserted in this feature. Any readers communicating with "Mr. X," and wishing for a reply, should inclose a stamp-addressed envelope. All letters should be addressed to "Mr. X" (care of THE ROYAL MAGAZINE), 18, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

## A REQUEST.

MR. X particularly requests all his readers, especially those who wrote to him about the puzzle "Before Answering, Think," to turn to page 96.

## FIND THE MISSING LETTERS.

A . . . . . walked across the green.
No . . . . . saw he there.
He . . . . . around as though he'd been
In his own . . . . . fair.

(The same letters, transposed, are used in each case.)

## Ho! Ho!

JONES: "There was excitement in town last night."

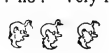
JAMES: "What was it?"

JONES: "A policeman tied to a lamp."

JAMES: "Ha! ha! ha! Who did it?"

JONES: "He was on night duty with his lamp fastened to his belt."

JAMES: "Ho! ho! Very funny!"



## DOMINOES.

Here is a capital little puzzle to be performed with dominoes or with slips of paper numbered to represent a set:

Arrange a full set of dominoes, from double blank to double six, so that each line downwards counts twenty-four and each line sideways counts twenty-one. It can be done, and there is no trick about it. Solution next month.

## CAUGHT AFTER ALL.

ROBERT: "I say, Henry, what do you make of this?—There was a donkey tied to a rope, and the rope was four feet long; twelve feet away there was a bundle of hay, and the donkey wanted to get to the hay, because he was very hungry. How did he do it?"

HENRY (triumphantly): "Oh, I've heard that before; you want me to say 'I give it up,' and then you would say, 'so did the other donkey.'"

ROBERT: "Not at all, my dear man. Work it out; it's quite simple."

HENRY (after a pause): "Well, I don't know how he did it."

ROBERT: "He just walked up to the hay and ate it."

HENRY: "But you said he was tied to a rope."

ROBERT: "Yes, but the rope was not tied to anything. You mustn't jump at conclusions like that, you know."

**What twenty-one coins of the same size make the sum of £1?**

## A REAL PUZZLER.

ALGERNON: "You must take this carefully, Bertie, or it may hurt you. Ready?"

BERTIE: "Yes."

ALGERNON: "Well, when to-morrow is yesterday, to-day will be as far from the end of the week as was to-day from the beginning of the week when yesterday was to-morrow. What day is to-day?"

(Bertie is still puzzling it out. What day do you make it?)

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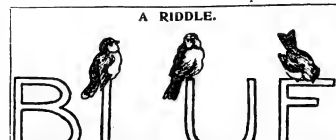
### To Pick up a Poker with the Open Hand.

This is a very simple but effective little trick. First seriously explain to your audience that it is all done by electricity. Rub your hand vigorously on the carpet until, as you announce, it crackles. Then, having sufficiently mystified the onlookers, you lay your open right hand across the poker, and, lo and behold, you raise it from the ground!

Here is the explanation: You grasp the wrist of your right hand with your left, and in doing so pass the forefinger of your left hand *under* the poker.

### A RIDDLE.




**What well-known bird is expressed by the above drawing?**

### For Sportsmen.

Smarte: "Talking about shooting, here's a curious thing for you. Suppose I saw twenty birds sitting on a gate and fired at them, killing two outright and just grazing two others, how many would there be left?"

Blunte: "Well, I don't see anything curious about that. If you only killed two there would be eighteen left."

Smarte: "Wrong, quite wrong."

Blunte: "But you say you only just grazed the other two; they'd be left, wouldn't they?"

Smarte: "Certainly not."

Blunte: "Well, I don't know what you mean by 'grazed.' That makes four then, so there'd be sixteen left."

Smarte: "Wrong, hopelessly wrong."

Blunte (indignantly): "How many then?"

Smarte: "Why only two—the dead ones. The others would fly away."

### What is it?

**Up and down the road it goes,**
**Or over fields lasted—**
**Nothing of its body shows,**
**It travels on its head.**

### How to Win Five Shillings.

A.: "I say, old fellow, I bet you five shillings you can't say 'Ipecacuanha' six times running without stopping."

B.: "Ipecacuanha, ipecacuanha, ipecacuanha, ipecacuanha, ipecacuanha. There you are! Five shillings please."

A.: "Not so fast, old chap, I said *running* and you are standing still. Hand over the five bob."

### Modern Logic.

Joney: "The moon is made of green cheese, and you can't deny it."

Smitho: "What nonsense, prove it."

Joney: "Well, you will admit that either it *is* or it *isn't?*"

Smitho: "Yes, I admit that."

Joney: "Well, we all know it *isn't*, therefore it must be that it *is*."

### A Universal Superstition.

Maggie: "I didn't know you were superstitious before."

Jack: "Why?"

Maggie: "Putting nails in your pocket."

Jack (feeling in his pockets): "There are no nails in my pockets."

Maggie: "Oh, yes, there are. You have ten there now—finger and thumb-nails."

### Remarkable Wood.

Jones: "You see that piece of wood, well it's out of the ark."

Bones: "Rubbish. I'm not so green as all that."

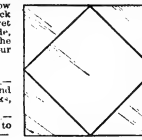
Jones: "I tell you it's a fact."

Bones: "How can you prove it?"

Jones: "Because it has never been in."

### SOLUTION OF THE WINDOW PUZZLE.

The problem was: Having a window 3ft. high, 3ft. wide, and square, to block up half of it so that there shall yet remain a window 3 ft. high, 3ft. wide, and square. This has been done in the diagram by blocking up the four corners.



### RESULTS.

Was it a Tragedy? (*page* 563).—No, look at the writing carefully and you will see that Jones shot Rogers, not Brooks.

Not Over Difficult (*page* 563).—It was required to add six strokes to twelve O's so as to make a sentence:—

o q o o d d o q d o q o

How did he do it? (*page* 563).—He turned the 6 upside down making it 9, then arranged the numbers thus: 961.

A Puzzle and a Prize (*page* 563).—Persevere ye perfect men, ever keen; hone upon pin Len.

Please (h attempt This (*page* 478).—The lost S's, and the hat.

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III.—THE JOCKEY'S POINT OF VIEW.

*A Graphic Description of a Jockey's Feelings during a Race, and how his Surroundings Appear to him from his almost Flying Steed.*

By A. E. Johnson.

The saddling bell is clanging out a noisy summons as I leave the dressing-room and enter the paddock. There is disquietude in the air; the ear is assailed, if one may put it so, by the inaudible hum of the racecourse. Not that the vast crowds which blacken the high stands, or blot, like a stain, the open heath beyond the rails, are silent. On the contrary, the noise they make is as the noise of Bedlam let loose.

But it is not the shouts and cries, vociferously rending the air, which drum upon the ear and set me tingling from head to foot. It is that strange atmospheric disturbance, denoting the presence of a great concourse of people, which electrifies me. I feel myself to be in the presence of thousands.

The scene in the paddock is pleasant enough. The sun shines brilliantly down upon the level green sward, gay with the bright dresses of the ladies and the flaming colours of the jockeys' silken caps and jackets. The well-dressed company strolls round and about, quietly and without disorder. A singularly well-disciplined and impassive company: to look at them one would little dream that many have fortunes staked upon the issue of the big race which is now to be decided—have hazarded their all, perhaps, upon the uncertain temper of one or other of the mettlesome horses now being walked up and down before their critical but inscrutable gaze.

With a quick glance over the paddock I single out my mount, where he steps proudly beside his stable attendant. Owner and trainer join me as I walk towards him. A word to the lad who holds the bridle, and he is led away from the press to a quiet corner. The flimsy racing saddle is quickly slipped on, and the girths carefully adjusted. My mount submits patiently, and acknowledges my pats with a friendly whinny. A gallant beast he is—lithe, active, and in perfect fettle, with clean-cut limbs, and a coat that gleams like satin in the sunshine. His proud spirit flashes in his high-glancing, fearless eye. And when he moves, graceful ripples that delight the eye chase each other over the glossy skin and show the working of the firm muscles and sinews.

Is there any finer example of physical perfection than a racing thoroughbred, trained to a hair, and impatient to pit his speed and endurance against his fellows? My heart swells with joy and exultation at the thought that *I* am to ride this glorious flesh and blood.

A hoist from a helping hand and I am in the saddle. The stable-lad hurriedly sponges out the nostrils of my mount, and, after rinsing his mouth with water from a bottle, lets go his head. As we move forward my legs feel, through the thin covering of the saddle, the working of the muscles in my gallant steed's back.

No bean-fed hack is this, pacing it lumberingly under heavy gear. Not only can I feel the restless impetuosity of the proud creature under me, but in the imperious arch of his neck and the poise of his head I can perceive the fiery temper of his spirit. With that

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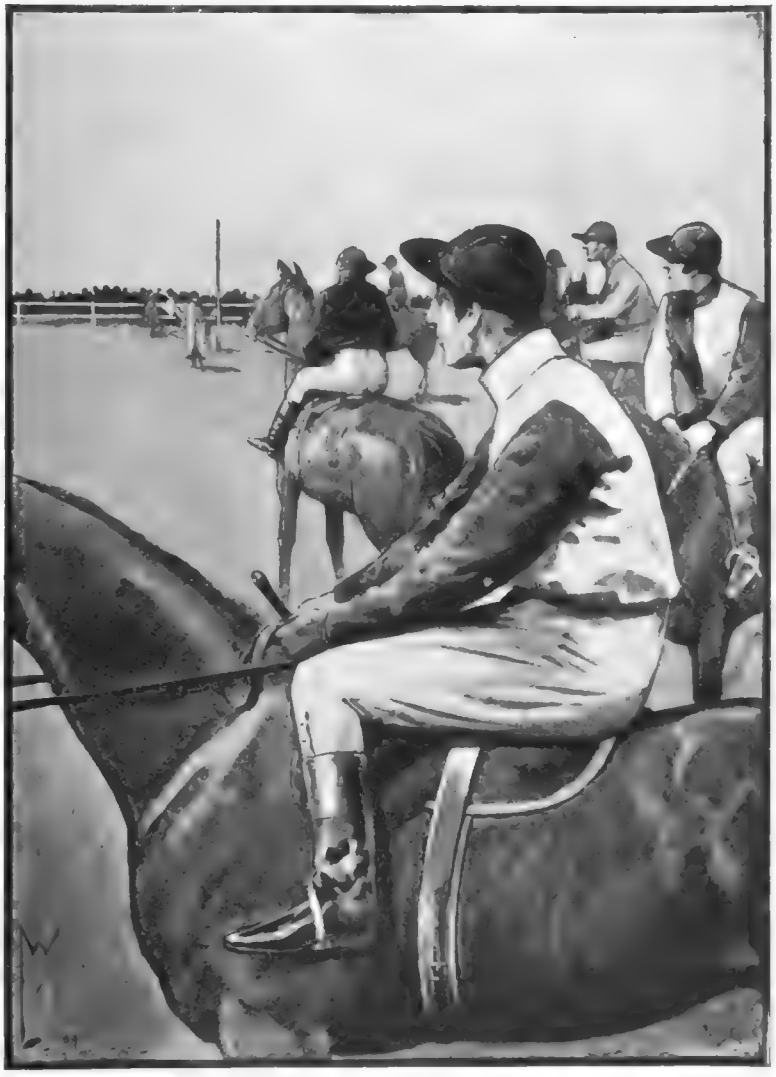
spirit I, myself, become for the nonce infected, and as I feel (or persuade myself I feel) between the tightening grip of my thighs the hot blood coursing through the creature's veins, our individualities become merged. His is the frame that shall bear the stress of struggle, and mine is the brain that shall direct and guide. Behold the true Centaur: horse and man welded into one personality.

But, first, the parade: in single file we walk round and round the paddock, rivals in the coming trial of speed and strength. Critical eyes are turned upon us, and comments exchanged in muttered undertones. And so, out from the paddock on to the wide course. As the leader of the string appears, the continuous roar of the racecourse swells momentarily louder, then sinks again to normal pitch.

For some distance up the course, past the close-packed stands on the one hand and the immense black mass of people round the winning-post upon the other, we walk; then, turning, canter smartly back to the starting point. And ready enough to canter is my mount. All through the earlier part of the parade he has been impatiently tugging at his bit. Now he breaks into a brisk and easy canter that sets the heart pulsing, and the blood tingling with its suggestion of suppressed vigour and eagerness.

At the starting point there is a brief delay. The starter stands at the side; ready to send us thundering down the green course. My allotted place is near the rails, and my mount, after I have manœuvred him into position, waits quietly enough, though I can feel the tension of his nerves, for the signal. Not so some of our opponents. One in particular occasions not a little trouble, and brings upon his jockey some caustic remarks from the starter.

At length a fair measure of order is obtained. With the tail of my eye I catch a quick motion of the starter's hand; the flimsy barrier of the starting-gate flies up with a whirr and the white flag descends. On the



What the jockey sees just as the race is about to start.

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instant, as though galvanised, a spasm passes through my mount. His hoofs grip the turf with a jerk, and, as the warning bell clangs in my ear, he is into his stride and the race is begun in deadly earnest. The gasp with which the assembled multitude relieves its pent-up feelings, falls, so far as I am concerned, on deaf ears. I have something else to think of.

Any nervousness that may have affected me hitherto has vanished now. Gone, too, is all interest in anything save the race. *The race!* On that is concentrated my mind, my body, my whole being. And so it is with my mount—for the time being my other self indeed. For just as he is straining every fibre of his frame in the struggle, so am I exercising all my wits in generalship.

Left to himself my mount, 'tis evident, would run himself out before half the distance were covered. From the first moment of starting he has been boring and fighting for his head. But the words of his trainer, whispered into my ear as he swung me up into the saddle, are seared into my brain. "Lie off and wait till you're into the straight." They blaze before me in letters of fire. They sing themselves into my ears to the rythmic accompaniment of thundering hoofs. *Lie off and wait till you're into the straight, lie off and wait till you're into the straight.*

So my grasp of the reins remains steady, and my mount has to hold himself in for the present. As we sweep up the hill I am lying fourth or fifth; as we tip over the crest, scarcely aware of the silent knot of spectators assembled there to watch us passing, I become conscious (without any need of looking round) that another horse is fast coming up on the outside. My mount knows it, too, and as a chestnut with a plaited mane—hot favourite for the race—forges by, it needs all the power of my hand to restrain his ardour.

And, indeed, the temptation is scarcely less strong to me. The instinct to keep ahead is almost invincible. But I remember my instructions, and with an anxious and fast-throbbing heart hold on my way.

Meanwhile, the order of running has been constantly changing. As to what is happening to the tail I know not, nor care. My gaze is fixed ahead on a bee-line drawn between my horse's ears, and, looking so, there comes comprehensively within my purview all that I need to see. My opponents I can distinguish, without looking at them individually, by the the colours they wear. And as I watch them, and the changing order of the race, my mind is working, working all the time, marking down the most dangerous opponents, discarding those who will obviously not last the distance, and puzzling out the chances of success and failure.

But let it not be thought that the mental strain outweighs the physical enjoyment. He knows nought of the real joys of horsemanship who has never bestridden a thoroughbred in a well-contested race. As well might a child talk of its feats upon the wooden horse of a merry-go-round, as such an one talk of the pleasures of the saddle. Exhilarating may be the fast gallop over the pastures of the shires; magnificent may be the wild charge of cavalry in action, but naught is there that can compare with the long green lane between the low white posts, and the flying pace of the racehorse straining every nerve to outstrip the field, willing, able, and determined to win.

The race proceeds. At length we near the final bend that will take us into the straight. *Then*, will come the tug-of-war of Greek against Greek. Some half-dozen only remain in the running that need seriously to be reckoned with, and of these I fear none greatly but the plait-maned chestnut. As we swerve round into the straight course for home and see the goal ahead the latter leads. Close behind comes a big black, with a roan at his heels, and I lie fourth. Clinching my teeth I sit down to ride my horse.

Now is my time.

The good beast knows it, too, and answers my call with a gallant burst of speed. No need for whip yet awhile, but as I come up rapidly alongside of them I note with grim satisfaction that both roan and black are being driven hard by their jockeys.

The chestnut leads by some two or three lengths and is going well. Shall we overtake her? My mount is putting forth his full strength now, and, passing the roan and black at a steady gallop, slips into second place.

Straight as a plank stretches the green track in front of us. Far ahead I am aware (though I give not a thought to it) of a solid black mass, into which the line of white posts and rails runs and is lost; likewise my brain is conscious of the huge white stands opposite that black mass, upon which are ranged, tier upon tier, rows and rows of black figures.

But I have eyes for nothing but the chestnut mare in front. Slowly the gap between us lessens. We are gaining, and gaining steadily, and I know it. But will there be time? Then suddenly the chestnut's jockey raises his right arm; down comes the whip on the quarters, again and again,

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This is what the jockey sees in a race, as he gazes in a bee-line between the pointed ears of his straining mount at the long green course before him.



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the arm rising and falling with the clockwork regularity of a flail. A wave of joy and triumph surges over me as I see it. The chestnut is beaten; faster she cannot go, while my gallant beast has yet a spurt to give when I choose to call for it.

The gap between us is decreasing rapidly now. As I creep up I note the heaving flanks and hear the sharp, incisive *crack, crack* of the whalebone as it descends with relentless persistence; but pity I have none, only exultation. As we begin to draw level I raise my own whip. At the first cut I feel a shudder go through the straining flesh under me. But the effort demanded is forthcoming, and in a moment we are racing neck and neck over the last few hundred yards, past the towering stands, past the great massed crowd pressing upon the rails. A deafening roar fills the air; but for all that, I can hear the breathing of my horse, and even more plainly the thumping of my own heart.

Ahead I catch sight of the little hut within which I know the judge is seated; and upon that I fix my gaze. From out the corner of my eye I can see the chestnut pluckily holding on her way; but as her head drops gradually back I realise that the race is mine. Another score of paces and I see the judge in his box leaning eagerly forward. His anxiety tickles me. Why this doubt? The race is mine—*mine!* We flash by the winning-post, and all is over.

Hardly have I pulled up before the crowd has burst forth from behind the rails and is pouring over the course to surround us. My owner, pride, pleasure, excitement, and importance lighting his face and swelling his figure, hurries out to meet us. He takes the bridle in his hand, and leads my gallant mount towards the paddock. I drop the reins and sit back listless. The tension of my nerves has snapped, and the reaction leaves me limp and feeble. The surging crowd, and the tumult of cheers and applause do not fire me. The general enthusiasm seems flat and foolish.

Inside the paddock I jump to the ground, and slipping off the saddle make my way to the weighing room. It is an anxious moment for my owner as I take my seat in the scales, but to me the question as to whether I have complied with the necessary requirements seems to possess but little interest. I tip the beam correctly, however, and my owner heaves a sigh of relief as he sees it. "All right," calls the clerk of the scales.

The cry is taken up, repeated, and carried across the course. "Pay, pay, pay," shout the crowd. Their interest in the race has only just reached its climax. Mine petered out when I saw the post flash by, and knew that I had won. Nor will it be aroused again until I find myself once more astride a bonny steed, listening expectant, with keen-set nerves, to the starter's imperative instructions. It is with a quiet, albeit well-satisfied mind, therefore, that I saunter off to the dressing-room, there to doff my flimsy garb, or await the saddling-bell for the next race.

But 'tis not given to every man to ride a winner's race. And bitter is the lot of the jockey, who, urging his mount along the straight, and knowing that he has reached the end of his resources, yet hoping against hope that he may safely reach the post, feels himself pursued, hard pressed and overtaken.

Remorselessly he plies his whip, but the lithe, stinging whalebone produces no effect. His mount is "stony"; though the gallant spirit be willing, the sore-tried flesh is weak, and can no further go. With a feeling of despair, the jockey sees the dilating nostrils and the outstretched craning neck of the pursuing horse passing him. Then the flaunting jacket of his rival goes derisively by, and sick at heart he knows the day is lost. Too late he thinks of what he *ought* to have done: of tactics he *might* have pursued. His regrets are vain, and not the less bitter on that account.

Worse still the plight of the jockey who is thrown at the start. For such misfortunes sometimes occur. Horses are but too often restive before the starting gate, or when waiting for the fall of the flag. Irritated by the unmanageableness of his mount, flustered by the pungent comments of the starter, the jockey loses his head. A sudden freak on the part of the fidgeting horse, and the rider is sprawling on the turf. The reins are jerked out of his hand, and away down the course goes the startled steed—riderless, the empty stirrups banging on his flanks, hotly pursued by a mounted policeman.

And the impressions of that jockey as he rises, shaken, from the ground, and gazes after the retreating figure of his recalcitrant mount are both vivid and remarkable. But his point of view is one that is best left to the imagination, and not verbally—at least in his own words—expressed.

*(Next month contains a very interesting article on the impressions of a public speaker.)*

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A sudden jerk and the jockey is thrown from his horse. As he falls he catches a flying impression of the racers storming past him and above him.

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# REAL LIFE ROMANCES.

*If you Know of any True Stories Suitable for these Pages Send them to the Editor.*

## For Her Mother's Sake.

RIGHT up in British Columbia, cold and snow-bound, lived a miner grizzled and old.

Down south in California, beautiful and sunny, lived a little telephone girl, pretty and young. Of course you do not see the connection between these two very opposites. But there is a connection as this story will show.

The miner, grizzled and old, was not always thus.

It was many years back, but in his memory there lurked a time when he was really happy.

In those earlier days, there was a girl—the loveliest girl in Puget Sound. She was his sweetheart.

One day she promised to be his wife.

Then time slipped by; such happy days they were, when he and she used to sit beneath the maple tree and talk.

One day they met at the accustomed trysting-place. It was under the self same maple tree. But something had happened. There was something in this lover's meeting that had never been there before.

He saw "his Mary" standing there before him!

True they talked, but their words sounded hollow. Presently they became silent.

Then she accused him of being unfaithful, of being seen with another girl. Oh, yes, she knew all about it, so there was no use denying it.

But he did deny it, denied with that terrible earnestness that cannot lie.

Still she would not listen.

That was the last time they met under the maple tree.

For some weeks he lingered, hoping she would make it up, and all would be well and happy again.

But his hopes were shattered. They told him that the belle of Puget Sound was married, and had gone to live in California.

Then he became a madman. He swore that he would hunt down the man that had snatched his love from him. Then better thoughts prevailed. The old haunts became unbearable. He was young, there were many years of life before him.

But what was life without her?

Work, hard work, was the only remedy.

Forthwith he sold his little house, and with the money journeyed up north. There in British Columbia he made his home.

And so he turned prospector. He tapped the ground for quartz—and searched the beds of streams in summer for virgin gold.

It passed the time, that was all he cared for.

But fickle fortune smiles on those who scorn her graces; and one night he weighed his wealth. Then he realised that after thirty years of unceasing toil, he was rich—very rich.

A sudden longing came over him to go to California. The flame that he had subdued this score of years, still burnt fiercely beneath his rugged face. At length he arrived at Oaklands. That was a place written on his heart. With trembling hand he knocked upon a certain door. The sound of light footsteps tripping along the passage caught his ears. How they reminded him of her. He wondered what she would be like after thirty years.

The door opened. What a sight met the eyes of the old gold digger! Instead of seeing, as he expected, a middle-aged woman, he saw "his Mary" standing before him, looking as young as ever.

For a minute, he did not realise that it was not Mary that he saw. It was Mary's daughter.

Her mother was dead she told him, in answer to his inquiries, she was a telephone girl, and——

Then the old longing to be away came over him, and he rushed from the house.

Two months after he died. By his will it was found that all his wealth, to the extent of six hundred thousand pounds, had been left to the little telephone girl in Oaklands, the daughter of his lost love.

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# Ten Thousand Love-Letters.

IT is not every girl that can boast of having ten thousand suitors to her hand.

But this was a Maori girl, and she lived in a little Maori hut.

Well, of course, you will not believe that it was her face that brought all those bags full of letters offering her husbands by the thousand. Nor was it her wealth, for she was quite poor.

It was a joke.

Two globe-trotters—Americans, please remember—had been spending their holidays in New Zealand. They had seen this Maori girl, and when they returned to the States they conceived a plan.

They inserted an advertisement in all the papers acclaiming the beauties of the Maori girl. She was lovely, she was rich—worth seven thousand pounds a year—and moreover she was a Princess.

Added to all this her "heart's desire" was to marry a white man. Correspondence was invited with anyone who felt inclined to wed.

That was the finishing touch!

Well, such an appeal naturally caused quite a flutter of hearts in all the forty-four States in the Republic. It was wonderful what a lot of men it inspired to love. Even confirmed old bachelors began to think of that little Maori "Princess" who wanted to marry a white man. Perhaps some even had a vague vision that the seven thousand a year might be useful. There's no telling!

Now we must leave the fluttering hearts in the States and fly to that Maori Village, and the little mud hut where the "Princess" dwelt.

One day the postman came to her. It was not often he had anything for her, so she stood waiting for the letter—one letter. Judge to her surprise when, instead of a letter—one letter—the postman began handing her bundle after bundle of letters, thousands of them. She could hardly believe her eyes.

What did it mean?

She seized the first, tore it open, read, and gave a little jump of surprise. Good gracious, it was a *billet-doux*—and from a nigger too. He told her of how he had never felt his heart beat faster than when he read her advertisement. She was the sweetest, loveliest, and most charming creature in the world. He could tell that from the wording of her advertisement, so there was no disputing that fact. Wealth, what was wealth? He scorned it!

So did the Maori maiden, and she cast his letter aside and took up the next.

This was from a miner in Idaho. He told her he weighed fifteen stone! was the boss of Hanger's Luck; could lick any man in the town; and lastly added "I have never been a convict."

Even this noble and virtuous creature did not appeal to the "Princess." Why was it that all these men wanted to marry her? She could not understand. Some called her "Princess"—what did that mean? Another talked of gold—wrote on paper marked "Baker and Confectioner." (Baker, not banker please):—"While I have no noble title to add to your lustre, I have a kindly disposition and a loving heart. This, my sweet Princess, I am willing to sacrifice to the shrine of your loveliness in consideration of the sum named, *i.e.*, seven thousand pounds a year. Please cable."

So she went on opening letter after letter, but it did not make much difference to the pile; there were three thousand at the least.

At last she gathered together the three thousand letters in her arms and ran all the way with them to her hut.

When she got there, to her surprise, she found seven thousand more that had just been left by the postman.

Never was a Maori girl in such perplexity! But here we must leave her still reading through her bulky heap of *billets-doux*.

Let us hope that she will find one out of all these adorers that is everything that she can wish for. We, however, have heard as yet no news about her wedding.

At any rate she has our best wishes.

She went on opening letter after letter.

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## A Fortunate Resemblance.

THIS story was told to me in the train whilst travelling between Chelmsford and Colchester.

I was the only occupant of the carriage except a tall, handsome, middle-aged man. Somehow we got into conversation.

"Do you know," he remarked, "it is fifteen years since I travelled along this piece of the line. That was the turning-point in my career."

Seeing that he was becoming reminiscent, I expressed great interest in this remark.

"Yes," he proceeded, "fifteen years ago next December. I was poor: fortune had frowned on me with a heavy scowl. How that day comes back to me, even in the height of my prosperity! I mean the day, or rather the night, when I entered Liverpool Street Station. In my pocket was a third-class ticket to Antwerp and nineteen and sixpence in silver. The rest of my possessions I carried mostly on me; a few toilet requisites, and a couple of books, were all that was in my bag.

"Well, having found a carriage, I annexed a corner seat, and, placing my bag on it, went off to buy a paper. As I was returning, I saw an old friend in another carriage. He invited me to join him. There was only a minute before the train started, so hurrying to the compartment where I had left my bag, I seized it and barely succeeded in reaching my friend's carriage as the train moved out.

There, on the top of a pile of papers—was a diamond necklace.

"We had a pleasant chat until we reached Chelmsford, where he left me.

"Presently I noticed my paper, and opening it I scanned the headlines. There was nothing of interest except a 'Daring Jewel Robbery.' It appeared that a valuable diamond necklace belonging to an American heiress had been stolen from a hotel.

"I was still reading it, when the grating of the brakes awoke me to the fact that we were nearing Parkeston.

"By the time I had crushed the paper into my pocket, the train had pulled up.

"So, bag in hand, I stepped on to the crowded platform. I found the boat did not sail until half-past ten, so I went into the refreshment room. Somehow, a feeling that I was being watched came over me. As I sipped my coffee, I glanced furtively round and distinctly saw a dark, keen-looking man point me out to his companion. A sudden nervousness seized me. I hastily put down my coffee and hurried from the place.

"Hardly had I stepped on to the platform, than a hand descended on my shoulder, and a low, but sharp voice said:

"'Will Cordsey, I hold a warrant for your arrest, and apprehend you on suspicion of being concerned in stealing a diamond necklace from the Hotel —— last night.'

"In vain I protested my innocence of the theft; I was led into a waiting-room where they showed me a photo of Cordsey. I must confess the resemblance between us was remarkable.

"'Look here!' I shouted in desperation, at the same time seizing my bag. My name was on the fly-leaf of those three books, and I felt confident of success. 'I will prove to you who I am!'

"In my excitement I threw open the bag, when—there, on the top of a pile of papers was—a diamond necklace!

"A satirical grin came over the detectives' faces at this grand piece of 'bluff,' as they considered it.

"Of course, my feeble excuse that this was not my bag availed me nothing.

"Early next morning I was taken back to London by the first train. There, partly by the aid of my Chelmsford friend, I succeeded in proving my innocence. I say partly, because the real Will Cordsey was arrested the same night as I was. He had my hand-bag in his possession. So I was at once liberated.

"Now, I wonder if you have seen how I benefited by losing my boat and being arrested? Well, it was this way. I got half the reward that the American heiress offered.

"I at once wrote explaining that it was impossible for me to go to Antwerp.

"With the five hundred pounds I exploited a little idea that I had long lacked the means to patent. From the beginning it was an immense success, and now, to-day, I am a rich man."

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# The Princess's Missing Wedding Dress.

THIS is the story of a Royal wedding dress that the Princess of Wales intended to wear at the marriage of Princess Alice of Albany and Prince Alexander of Teck.

On the morning of the wedding-day, the dress had not arrived. It was expected the night before, so the Princess became anxious.

Such a bustling over a dress there never was in a Royal household as there was that morning.

Telegram after telegram was sent to the Royal dressmakers. Still nothing could they learn of the missing gown. Then the telephone bells were kept tinkling for hours, and all sorts of messages were sent to discover its whereabouts. Messengers flew backwards and forwards hunting for clues. But not a sign of the strayed gown could they find.

At last, after whole peals had been rung on the telephone bells, the mystery was solved.

Such an ordinary mistake it was! Of course the parcel had been wrongly addressed. It had been sent to someone who was not a Princess.

Now everyone has heard of Frogmore House, Berks. That was where the missing dress ought to have been sent. But it was not. Instead the label read like this:

PRINCESS OF WALES,
FROGMORE HALL,
HERTS.

It seems strange that anyone should mistake Herts for Berks; but that is what really did happen.

Now as soon as this was known, everyone felt relieved. A special messenger was at once dispatched post haste from London to St. Albans. That is the post town for Frogmore Hall, Herts.

Of course, this all took time. And time is a very important matter, especially when a wedding gown is at stake.

There was only two hours and a quarter left before the wedding, when the messenger arrived at St. Albans.

There he soon found the missing parcel, and ordered a "special." Again everything went wrong. There was not a single engine to spare in the sheds of St. Albans. In vain he implored the officials to bestir themselves. They could do nothing. So he had to content himself by travelling in an ordinary slow train to King's Cross.

At length the train crawled into London, with beating heart the Royal messenger seized his prize, leaped from the train, and dashed into a cab.

Away he went to Paddington, the driver urging on his horse until the cab wheels whirred like a motor car.

In a surprisingly little while the cab clattered into Paddington Station.

Then the clock struck twelve. He had still half-an-hour.

But still undaunted away he rushed in search of a train. Splendid news at last! A guard ran up and announced that there was a "special" waiting to convey him to Windsor.

Out it steamed throttles free—signals up—line clear—Royal messenger—lost dress—special train.

That was the order of the line. Full speed ahead, away it tore, past acres of flooded fields, until it steamed alongside the Windsor platform.

Was there yet time? Or had the Princess given up the pretty wedding-gown in despair, and gone to the marriage in another? That was the question.

The messenger flung his prize and himself into a modest "growler."

Again the messenger sprang out of the train, and flung his prize and himself into a modest growler.

Crack went the whip, away went the cab. Never had Jehu driven so before! But then there was not such an inducement every day.

Already the messenger could hear the joyous marriage bells pealing their loudest from the castle tower.

He was very near now. Servants sprang forward; the gates were flung open wide; the cab drew up at the palace; out leapt the messenger with his prize, his face triumphant.

"Too late!"

Those were the fatal words that caught his ears; the wedding had already commenced.

So the Princess was compelled to wear another gown.

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*An Article for Ladies, Telling Them how to Dress Their Hair in the Latest and Prettiest Fashions; also how to Augment a Scanty Head of Hair with the Help of Art.*

By P. B. Carmichael.

(*President of the International Society of Hairdressers.*)

"Oh, it's all very well for you!" cries one young lady to another. "You have lovely long hair, and can do anything you like with it. Mine is too disgustingly short for words. It's all I can do to make a presentable knot of it at the back."

But there is an easy way, my dear young lady of the scanty locks, of remedying this evil. You can get a long switch of hair and fix it on behind. It is the same colour as your own hair to the minutest shade, and when dressed in a becoming knot on the back of your neck, no one can tell that you have called in Art to make up for the lamentable deficiencies of Nature.

These switches, which are fastened on to a comb or tortoise-shell hairpin, can easily be slipped into the hair, high up or low down, according to the mode of dressing required.

A modern Court dressing. The hair is dressed in the prevailing fashion. There is little dressing at the back, for that part of the head is covered by a gracefully draped veil. Elderly ladies are permitted to wear lace. In the front is a spray of white ostrich feathers.

A switch of modest length costs a guinea. That is to say, one of dark hair. Light or grey shades are more expensive.

If a lady finds that her hair will not curl or wave nicely in front, she can get a false fringe, or —for ladies never like to use such a word—a *toupée*. These fringes are so carefully made that it requires the close inspection of an expert to tell the difference between a false and a natural fringe. The cost is from thirty shillings upwards, the price varying according to the shade of hair and the size of the fringe. A waved front can be purchased as well. This costs as little as a guinea for merely the front part; to cover the whole head (called a Transformation) would cost from five guineas.

But many ladies are fortunate enough to be able to dispense with this luxury, and wave

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their hair themselves. In the case of naturally wavy hair, a good waving with the tongs will last six weeks or even two months; but some hair will hardly wave at all, and even when it has passed under the tongs for some time, the waving will last little more than a couple of nights.

The art of hairdressing has rapidly improved during the last ten years or so. The reason for this is the institution of good technical schools for the teaching of the art. A student on entering one of the schools is taught, firstly, the rudiments of hairdressing—that is to say, brushing and combing. He learns, too, the ordinary simple dressings. His next step is to study complicated dressings, and, finally, he is qualified as a first-class workman, and learns historical and *poudrée* dressings.

Then there is an annual competition held by the International Society of Hairdressers for the Coronation Challenge Shield. This competition is open to hairdressers from all over the world. Each aspirant must make two dressings from living subjects, one high and one low. The time allowed is seventy-five minutes for the two.

The tongs are all heated in readiness. The brushes, combs, ornaments, and other little necessities are ready and at hand. So, when the word to start is given, a roomful of hairdressers work merrily away, curling, waving, and combing.

A curled coiffure, made with the aid of a bunch of curls. The hair is waved round the sides and back to get the necessary fullness.

Front view of the same dressing. The short hair in front is curled lightly on the forehead.

A plain, waved dressing, high on the head, made very effective with side combs and a big comb at the back.

In 1902 the Coronation Shield was won by a Scotchman, the second and third being respectively German and Dutch. The 1903 competition was won by a German resident in London, closely run up by a Belgian and an Englishman. I mention these facts to show of what an international character the competition is.

The waved low dressing will be the fashionable mode for this year. The low dressing really originated in London. Some time after Paris followed suit. There will, of course, be a fashionable high dressing, for a low dressing is not suited to all ladies; the high one is very smart, and will have many adherents.

The fashions are devised by the smart hairdressers in Paris as a rule. The low dressing waved or curled in front at present in vogue is most popular. It is very pretty, and suits the majority of ladies admirably. A few years ago the hair was dressed high up on the head. Since then it has come quite low down, gone up on top again, and once more come

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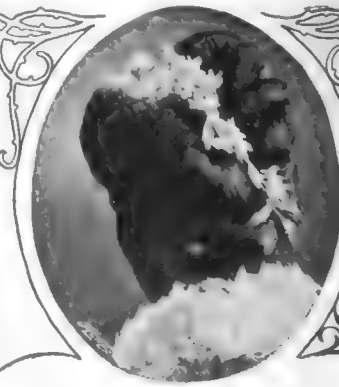
A pretty "low dressing" suitable for a small, oval face. The front is parted and waved.

The back view of the same dressing. The hair is coiled low on the neck with combs.

This is a pretty dressing much worn at present and is very fashionable this season. In the middle over the forehead is a pretty curl known as the "Regent Dip."

This is a side view of the same dressing. The hair is coiled very low on the neck and combs are placed at the back and sides.

A very smart evening dressing. The hair is parte' at the side and well waved. A spray of artificial flowers is pinned into the hair from back to front.



This shows the same dressing from behind. The hair is coiled up fairly high, and well brushed out at the back.

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1. A *poudré* dressing is a very serious affair. The hair must be curled first, and usually it is put in curl papers over night.

2. When the curling is completed, the hair is combed and brushed carefully with a solution of glycerine and water.

3. Then comes the powder. If there were no glycerine on the hair, the powder would never stay on, but would shake off as the lady moved about.

4. Here is the hair partially piled up and partially powdered; the powder is put on heavily while the dressing is being made up.

5. Here is a complete *poudré* dressing, with ostrich feathers on the top and long curls hanging down the sides. The result is very striking.

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A series of photographs illustrating a simple high dressing. Here is the hair being waved at the back, much the longest part of the operation.

The waved hair hangs round the head, while the top part, the long tail of which is to form the knot, is combed and tied.

The sides are taken up and arranged into the right shape.

The complete dressing with the back and side combs effectively placed.

down. In a few years it will be right on top again. But most ladies think of themselves before they think of the fashion, which, after all, is much the best.

Parisians themselves are not great hairdressers. It is from the south of France, from Marseilles and the neighbourhood, from the north of Italy and Florence, that the great experts come. However, they all gravitate sooner or later to the centre of fashionable Europe, Paris, and, hence, Paris at present dominates the world of hair-dressing. But soon London will be the leader of the art. The Challenge Shield, will soon bring the centre of hairdressing in its best and most artistic form to London. Finally, I am indebted to Mr. Robert, of Regent Street, for his valuable assistance in preparing this article.

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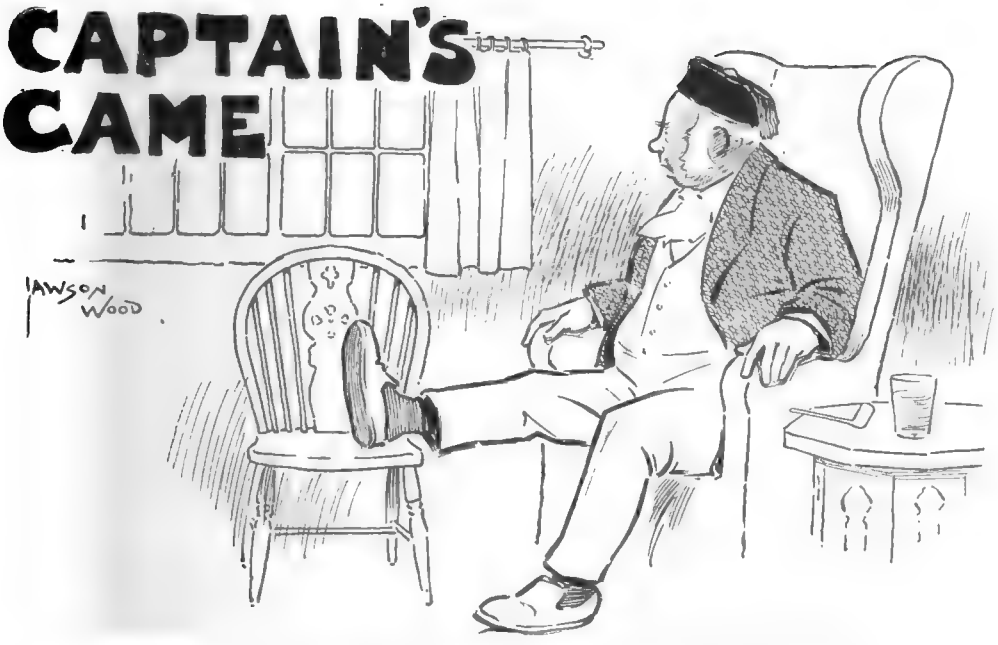
# THE CAPTAIN'S CAME




*A Story of Love and a Hen House in which a Burglary is Concerned.*

By J. Philpot Witham.

Captain Benson, R.N., retired, was a portly gentleman of some sixty-five years of age, with a florid complexion and white side-whiskers and an irascible temper.

He was a widower, and lived out Richmond way in a comfortable villa with a good-sized garden; and when not at his club divided his time pretty equally between the breeding of Indian game, which was his one particular hobby, and tyrannising over his daughter Mary, a pretty girl of twenty-two, and the three servants of whom his household consisted.

And at the present time both his hobby and his daughter were causing him considerable anxiety.

The Captain had, as usual, entered a pen of his celebrated Indian game for the Annual Poultry Show, now only some three weeks distant.

Would the coveted Chickweed Cup fall to his share this time? he wondered anxiously.

It was a case of "now or never." Three times in succession, or four times in all, this trophy had to be won; and at the present date the Captain had gained it three times (and now held it), and his chief rival, Jabez Hooker—a local poultry fancier and dealer—had been successful an equal number of years, so that this show would be decisive; for there were no admitted rivals worthy of the name in their special fancy.

Hence his perturbation.

The Captain's foot was extended on a chair in front of him. He had a touch of gout.

Suddenly there was a soft rustle of skirts, and his daughter entered the room, presenting before the old gentleman his second source of worry.

"Did I see you talking to that young cub of a Hammond this afternoon, Mary?" he snapped.

"Mr. Hammond did speak to me when I was in the garden," replied his daughter calmly. "He inquired very politely after your toe, dad. I think you are rather hard on him."

"Umph—the young humbug!"

Jack Hammond was a thorn in the side of the Captain.

When one has carefully arranged everything for one's daughter to marry a rising stockbroker with a safe £2000 a year it is most exasperating to have a handsome, penniless young man next door, whose garden is divided from yours by a wall only,

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and who persists in making opportunities for flirting on every occasion. It is still more exasperating when one's daughter views the undesirable with open favour and looks on the stockbroker with scorn.

But the Captain had found ere this that his daughter could not be treated in quarter-deck fashion. She had what is called "a will of her own."

"I think I have given you to understand, Mary," he said, with difficulty restraining his temper, "that I do not wish you to see any more of the fellow."

"Yes, father. Can I do anything for you?"

The Captain frowned.

"Um," he growled ungraciously, "you may as well see my prize birds are safe for the night. It's no use trusting those confounded girls to look after them; and my toe won't allow me to go myself." He eyed his offending foot with disfavour. "Remember what I have said to you," he urged, as his daughter went on her errand.

"Yes, dad"—very dutifully.

The Captain's seat commanded a view of the garden and a part of that of his objectionable neighbour, and he sat, with perplexed brows, watching his daughter as she walked down the path and finally disappeared behind some shrubs in the direction of the fowlhouse.

Suddenly he uttered a savage exclamation, and started from his chair.

His keen eyes had detected on the other side of the wall a swiftly-moving speck of brown, which was clearly making for the place whither his daughter had gone. It was "the ineligible" once more.

The Captain was beside himself with rage. Gout or no gout, he determined he would go down and give the fellow a piece of his mind; and making for the door, he very cautiously hobbled down the pathway to cut out the enemy.

Captain Benson was right; it *was* Jack Hammond he had seen. That enterprising young man had, further, clambered over the wall, and now stood with his arm round Mary Benson's waist while the door of the prize pen stood wide open and neglected, and an Indian game cock—the pride of its owner's heart—stood unheeded on the threshold, meditating a dash for freedom.

He was a fine-looking young fellow, this Jack Hammond. Standing six feet in his stockings, with his athletic frame clad in a suit of rough tweed, he was a splendid specimen of young English manhood.

"Well, dear," he was saying, "has the old dad been cutting up rusty again?"

Mary nodded. "Yes," she replied ruefully, "the last words he said to me before I came out were that he didn't wish me to see you again; and I am afraid, Jack, I——"

But she caught the sound of the Captain's uncertain footsteps as he came towards them, and broke off.

"Oh, my goodness! here he comes!" she whispered. "Don't let him see you, or I don't know what he will say. Where can you go?"

Jack Hammond looked towards the wall over which he had made his entry into the garden, but Mary caught his glance and detained him.

"No," she whispered, "he would see you—and he mustn't know you have been over here. (Guiltily) It was very wrong of you to come."

Then, her glance falling on the open door of the fowlhouse: "Quick—in here!"

And Hammond dashed into the hiding-place suggested as the Captain hobbled into sight—just in time to see a well-filled stocking terminating in a cycling-shoe vanish into his fowlhouse!

The sight filled the old man with an unholy joy. Here at last was a chance of scoring off this most objectionable suitor and exposing him to ridicule; and he determined to make the most of it.

He held his peace, however, and crossing slowly and painfully to a garden chair, seated himself, much to his daughter's dismay.

Pulling out his pipe, he waited until Mary should turn round; for she at present seemed engrossed in her task of egg-collecting; and the old man smiled with grim satisfaction.

When at length she considered her face was sufficiently under control not to betray any anxiety she confronted her father.

"You really should not have come down, dad," she said. "You will only do yourself harm."

"On the contrary, my dear, I feel all the better," said the Captain genially.

He looked it too.

"Lovely evening," he remarked, not pretending to notice that his precious birds were all huddled together at the further end of their "run," as if afraid to enter the house.

Mary wondered what could have put her father in such a genial mood.

She wrinkled her pretty brow trying to think of some excuse for getting him away. But in vain.

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He waited until there was not the slightest reason for her lingering any further over her task; watched her lock up; and then, even after she was ready to give him the help of her strong young arm towards the house, he showed no disposition to depart.

"Yes," he said, "that's a splendid bird. That scoundrel Jabez Hooker would give a ten-pound note for him—and he wouldn't be above stealing him if he got the chance, I know.

"But I think I have him safe enough — eh, Mary——?"

"Why—yes—of course, dad," faltered his daughter.

"Yes," continued the old man, "the house is of good inch boarding; and, fastened with those two padlocks, I think I may say I have taken every precaution. But, with so many rogues about, one must be careful."

He said this almost spitefully, his daughter thought.

"Ah, well, we'll go in now," he continued. "Give me your arm, Mary. You're sure you locked up safely?" And he led the way towards the fowlhouse.

Mary almost dropped with fright. Whatever spirit of mischief had made her father so suspicious this evening of all evenings, she wondered.

The Captain put his hand on the top padlock.

"Why, Mary," he said, "you haven't locked it!"

And it was even so.

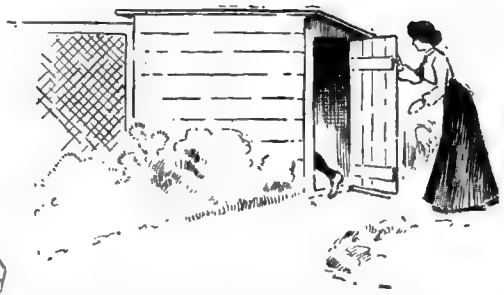
Her father always retained the keys of his precious poultry-houses at night, and, despairing of ever getting him away, she had adopted this expedient, intending to return as quickly as possible, lift off the unlocked padlocks, and release her sweetheart.

She trembled lest the Captain should take it into his head to look inside.

But he did not, and she breathed again.

Captain Benson was thoroughly enjoying himself.

With a muttered exclamation anent the carelessness of girls, he fastened both locks securely, deliberately placed the keys in his pocket, and together they went up the path towards the house.



**The sight filled the old man with an unholy joy.**

Before retiring that night the Captain wrote two notes—one to the favoured suitor, the stockbroker, inviting him to call at nine the following morning on pressing business, and the other to the Superintendent of Police to ask for a constable to attend at the same hour.

"We'll see the young cub has a suitable reception when he comes out," he murmured gleefully as he got into bed; and frequent choking noises indicative of stifled mirth broke the stillness of his room before he finally dropped off to sleep.

Yes, it seemed as if the Captain had arranged things so as to give the unfortunate Hammond a pretty disagreeable and humiliating five minutes next morning; but we shall see what variation Dame Fortune made in his plans.

* * * * *

With beating heart, Mary waited for the household to go to sleep, and then stole out into the garden to hold a consultation with her lover.

"It's no use, Jack," she whispered under the door. "I cannot get the keys."

Hammond whistled softly.

"I'm afraid you'll have to stay here until the morning," she continued. "Dad's foot is sure to be bad to-morrow, after his using it this evening"—("Serves the old beggar right too," muttered Hammond under his breath.)—"and he will be sure to ask me to come down and feed his precious birds and see what eggs there are. I can let you out then."

"All right, dear," returned Jack. "I'm quite comfortable. Don't worry about me."

And Mary Benson went back to the house—but not to sleep.

* * * * *

Hammond lay curled up in one corner of his limited prison. Under his head he had arranged a pile of hay of which he had

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despoiled the nesting-places; and he stolidly waited for the lagging hours to pass.

Twelve o'clock had just chimed from a neighbouring clock when he heard a slight noise in the garden. A cat, he speculated—or could it be Mary come to his assistance?

The sounds came nearer, until the prisoner could clearly tell them for the footstep of a human being. Not Mary's, he was prepared to swear.

Stealthily the person came nearer, and at length paused before the pen of prize birds, and a hand was laid on one of the padlocks.

Hammond's heart beat high. Here was luck indeed! Evidently someone was trying to steal the Captain's cherished Indian game.

But, he reflected, if he could not get out, was it possible a thief could get in?

The question was soon settled.

A key was turned in the padlock (the thief had evidently provided himself with a duplicate), and the top bar was taken down.

The newcomer then turned his attention to the second one, and that too was unfastened.

Hammond crouched by the door determined to at once "collar" whoever it might prove to be; but on second thoughts he decided to let him get inside first.

The door was stealthily opened, and a man entered and closed it after him.

Fumbling with a box of matches, he at length struck one, and in the light it gave Jack recognised the face of the Captain's chief rival, Jabez Hooker.

Giving the much-astonished poultry-thief a push, he sent him sprawling into the corner, jumped outside, closed the door and refastened it with the keys which he found left in the padlocks, and then sat down on the adjacent garden chair and indulged in five minutes' self-congratulation.

He then climbed over the wall and went indoors, had a hearty supper, and, after drinking success to himself, retired for the night to sleep the calm, untroubled sleep which we are told is the portion of the just.

By eight o'clock next morning he was again in his garden; but it was not until nine that Mary appeared, and, with a very doleful face and eyes that betokened a sleepless night, walked slowly down the gravel path.

She had not got the keys, he surmised.

Moreover, the Captain had just told her that the stockbroker was calling in that morning to admire his Indian game, and with him another friend (by which the Captain acetiously meant the constable), and her heart was very heavy.

A low "hist" made her look up with a start, and, to her surprise, she saw her lover's face beaming over the wall.

"Jack!" she cried in bewilderment. "You! Why, how——"

He leapt over the wall and came to her side, and mutual explanations followed.

"Oh! it's simply lovely!" she cried ecstatically. "It's grand! I long for the scene now—as much as I dreaded it before. And, do you know, Jack, from the hints he has dropped this morning, I feel sure dad saw you hide in the house last night."

"It certainly looks like it," replied Hammond as he kissed her.

"I shall be close at hand in case Hooker shows fight," he added, preparing to take his leave as the Captain's voice was heard at the entrance to the garden. "There ought to be some fun."

And there was.

* * * *

It was with an effort that Mary preserved her air of frightened expectation as, supporting her father, with the stockbroker and the policeman bringing up the rear, the little procession shortly afterwards wended its way in the direction of the fowlhouse.

The Captain was

He sent him sprawling into the corner.

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**A shrewd right-hander in the region of the belt . . . and the representative of the law bit the dust.**

as happy as a schoolboy—in spite of his toe—and chatted gaily with the odious stockbroker. Mary felt sure she once even caught him in the act of winking at him.

The Indian game were all in their run, and showed a strange disinclination to enter the house, which was not to be wondered at.

"Beauties!—aren't they?" chuckled the Captain, drawing the stockbroker forward. "But there is another one in the house, I think"—with a facetious look at Hammond's rival.

"Oh, no, dad," interposed his daughter mischievously. "One—two—three—four—five—six. They are all out."

But the Captain did not reply.

Hobbling to the door, he slowly unfastened it, and throwing it open, exclaimed, "Now, then, come out, my beauty! Let us have a look at you!" And waited, with a smile of expectation, for his prisoner to emerge.

There was a scramble, and out dashed the poultry-dealer.

Bang! went his right fist, and the Captain sat down with considerable emphasis on an upturned flower-pot.

Crash! went his left. The stockbroker took it on his jaw; the grin faded from his face, and he fell like a log beside the Captain.

There now only remained the constable to bar the way, and, to tell the truth, *he* did his best to give Hooker a clear passage, for the dealer looked like mischief.

Misinterpreting his generous intention, however, Jabez made straight for him.

A shrewd right-hander in the region of the belt—the dealer had no time, if inclination, for Queensberry rules—and the representative of the law bit the dust; and, glancing quickly round, Hooker made for the wall.

He already had one leg over, and was congratulating himself on his escape, when a tall figure in a Norfolk suit stepped from behind a shrub close by, and he was hauled back again.

Inserting one leg dexterously behind his prisoner, Hammond deposited him on the soft mould, and, kneeling on him, awaited further events.

The constable was the first to regain his feet. Bustling over to where the dealer lay, he drew his truncheon and knelt down beside him, earnestly praying for him to show some sign of resistance.

But Jabez Hooker knew better. He saw determination in the policeman's eye, and decided to keep quiet.

The Captain sat up among the shattered remains of the flowerpot—I said he was portly—felt his face very, very tenderly—and swore.

He inserted a thumb and finger into his mouth, withdrew a tooth which had



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become detached in the fray, and swore again —more vigorously.

Turning round, his glance fell on the little tableau under his garden wall—Hammond, with a triumphant smile now sitting on the prostrate Jabez, while the constable knelt beside them, with uplifted truncheon, and longing for the excuse to use it.

"Confound it!" he roared at length, "I could have sworn I saw you get into my fowlhouse last evening."

"Saw *me!*" said the person addressed, with an air of outraged innocence.

"Yes!" said the Captain, now a little doubtfully.

"At any rate, Captain," pursued Jack, with a twinkle in his eye. "You can certainly swear that it was not I whom you saw come out."

The old man forced a grim smile to his lips.

Yes, he certainly could!

But he was not satisfied.

"Come up to the house," he said.

Then to the policeman: "Take that man into custody, constable," pointing to the dealer. "I will come round shortly and charge him."

The stockbroker had by this time sat up, and was looking round with a dazed air; and the four followed the constable and his prisoner up the pathway.

The stockbroker, however, remembered an urgent appointment, and, after swallowing a stiff glass of brandy, took his leave, and Hammond and the Captain were left together.

The young man's explanation, apparently, was satisfactory, for on Mary entering the room an hour later she found them hob-nobbing over their glasses and cigars, while her father was relating to his rapt hearer the story of his brilliant capture of a slave dhow on the African coast—a hoary old chestnut which Mary had heard a hundred times.

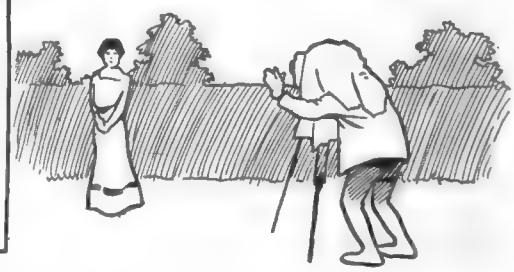
Hastily retreating, she closed the door and smiled happily, confident that all was now as it should be.

The Captain, it must be told, duly won the coveted cup, and the story of the way in which he was nearly robbed of his victory bids fair to oust the famous capture of the slave dhow from its post of honour.

# A Photo.

It was an amateurish thing—
The sole result of several dozen
Taken one brilliant day last spring
By some enthusiastic cousin.

Her mother sighed: "Do burn it, dear!"
Her father smiled with tender rudeness,
Her brothers were inclined to jeer,
Her giggling sisters murmured "goodness!"



A friend remarked, "Upon my word!"
Another, "Why it's simply frightful!"
"It *might* be you," exclaimed a third,
A truthful soul, if somewhat spiteful.

It disappeared. But till to-day
The owner never said she missed it.
I wish I knew what she would say
To him who stole and even kissed it.

J. J. B.

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# Sir HARRY'S WAGER

*A Romance of the Great North Road.*

By E. R. Punshon.

The heavy atmosphere, thick with tobacco smoke and the fumes of wine, seemed almost visibly to rock with the huge shout of applause that followed young Sir Harry's wilder acceptance of the wild wager my Lord Virden offered.

But succeeding the applause came an odd, uneasy silence till old Colonel Rigby rose suddenly from his chair.

"Gentlemen," he said, "a jest's a jest, and no man loves one more than old Will Rigby; but this goes beyond—this is no honest wager. Gentlemen, let us drink to Sir Harry and Lord Virden and to good comradeship, and so home, forgetting what I am sure was not really meant. Sure, 'tis only the wine that's humming in all our heads, I think. Pray, my Lord Virden, am I not right?"

My Lord Virden, a big and burly man, swollen with wine and much good living, looked sideways at the old Colonel, and then sideways again at the flushed, handsome face of young Sir Harry.

"Oh, doubtless!" he said, with a yawn, "and if Sir Harry is at all afeared——"

But Sir Harry interrupted him sharply.

"Nay," he said, "I passed my word, and I'll keep it, jackfool's trick as it may be."

The Colonel shrugged his shoulders despairingly, but he made one last attempt.

"Harry," he said in a whisper, "what of Mistress Helen Page?"

"I take it not friendly," said Sir Harry in as low a tone, "that you even speak her name here." He was quite sober now, which could not have been said with truth five minutes before, and he looked very quietly round at the wine-flushed faces of the assembled company. "Gentlemen," he said aloud, "pray take notice. The matter lies thus: My Lord Virden has wagered me I will not successfully stop a coach on this portion of the Great North Road where the two highwaymen, Big Tom and The Black, have sworn no other thief shall ply his trade. In proof of my success I am to return here before dawn with his purse if 'tis a man I stop, and some small trinket and a kiss if it be a woman; and if I am not here by dawn, then, gentlemen, you had best all go home."

He bowed to them and left the room, while the company stared awkwardly at each other, and exchanged muttered comments, and poured out yet more wine. And still Lord Virden smiled evilly to himself, looking sideways up and down the table, for it seemed to

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him that, win or lose this wager, Sir Harry had surely lost all hope of winning the hand of Mistress Helen Page, so leaving the course clear for himself.

And that was the thought stinging Sir Harry like a white-hot brand as he put his mare to the gallop and rode on through the darkness, with the cool night air playing on his forehead. Now he understood well enough why Lord Virden had so cunningly drawn him on to take this foolish wager, and his lips tightened with bitter self-reproach as he reflected that, however this mad task he was pledged to perform might turn out, success or failure must with almost equal certainty ban him from his mistress's presence. And with what smiling, cunning treachery his lordship had arranged it all!

"Oh, doubtless!" he said, with a yawn, "and if Sir Harry is at all afeared——"

Ostensibly this expedition was in defiance of the two notable highwaymen who for a year or more had held all the district in a reign of terror, and who had publicly declared that they would allow no other thief to trespass on their domain. Only one other rascal had ventured to dispute their authority, and him they had promptly shot; so that the neighbourhood was half content to put up with the scandal of their presence to be saved the trouble of other thieves.

Now his head was cooler Sir Harry saw well enough that the sting of what he had wagered lay here—that he was thrusting himself within reach of the law by taking purses on the highway, no matter for what purpose. And if the grip of the law was then something uncertain, it was ferocious and bloodthirsty enough, and he too big a quarry to be easily missed.

"Oh, 'tis a cunning plan," mused Sir Harry bitterly, "for, even if I escape the highwaymen and avoid the law, what will Helen say? At the best, I can scarce hope to avoid a year on the Continent, leaving Virden an open field with her."

Soon he came to where the Great North Road wound its long white way beneath the clear rays of the brilliant

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summer moon, and so accurately had something of which then he had no knowledge been timed that almost immediately he saw the lights of a coach plunging and jerking clumsily towards him over the rough, unmended surface of the road.

"Faith, I'm in luck for once," said Sir Harry to himself, never dreaming that even yet he had not fathomed the full depth of Lord Virden's treachery. "I can do my fool's errand and be back with the guineas in an hour or so. And 'twill go hard if I find not a chance soon for a little discourse with my good friend Lord Virden."

Hastily he tied a handkerchief over his face, leaving only his eyes clear, and then, shaking the reins, in a moment he was beside the approaching coach.

"Stand and deliver!" he called, presenting his pistol, and, with a terrified yelp, the coachman reined in his horses, crying:

"Don't fire, sir—for mercy's sake, don't fire!"

In spite of himself a certain exhilaration at the adventure began to stir in Sir Harry's young veins. He thrust out his hand, and, taking the blunderbuss from behind the coachman, he uncapped it and tossed it away. Then he flung open the door of the coach, and said politely:

"I fear me much I must beg the favour of your purses, if it pleases you?"

For a moment there was no answer, and then a flushed, furious old man thrust his red and angry face out into the dim light cast by the coach lanterns.

"Heaven," he swore, with a torrent of oaths, "if I were only twenty years younger I would fight for it! And as it is, you shall hang, my fine fellow—you shall hang, if there be law left in England! Sam Wilson," he shouted at the coachman—"you rabbit! you sheep's heart!—where's your blunderbuss?"

But the coachman was too frightened to answer, and Sir Harry himself spoke never a word, but only clung to the coach-door for support, fearing lest he should swoon. For in this angry old man he recognised Mr. Page, Helen's father, the one man in all the world in whose esteem he desired to stand high. And trembling in a corner of the coach, shrinking as far back as she might, was the slight form of Helen herself. Sir Harry groaned again, and wished very heartily that he were dead.

But the half-stifled groan of misery that he gave, his victims mistook for an exclamation of impatience.

"Give the man your purse, father," whispered Helen's tremulous voice. "Quick, father, or he may get angry and do us some hurt."

"Well, then, here's my purse," said old Mr. Page, with angry reluctance, thrusting it into Sir Harry's hand. "Take it, and let us go."

Still Sir Harry spoke no word, standing there stock still, dumb as a fish. He knew vaguely that the best thing he could do would be to get away as fast as possible; but he seemed to have lost all control of his limbs, and his dazed brain was unable to think coherently. Even speech was impossible to him, for his tongue had become curiously dry, and was literally cleaving to the roof of his mouth. He just stood still, mechanically holding the purse in his hand; and his odd behaviour began to attract the notice of the occupants of the coach.

"I cannot know the rogue," mused Mr. Page, "and yet the fellow seems familiar somehow, too. And that mare. Why, why!——"

"Oh! father, father!" said Helen's low voice in a sudden freezing whisper, and her white arm shot out and plucked away the handkerchief from Sir Harry's face. "Oh, oh!" she screamed, "'tis he, 'tis he!"—and she fell back on the seat, half swooning.

"Sir Harry, Sir Harry," said Mr. Page, "I never looked to see the day when your father's son should take purses on the highway, much as I have heard from Lord Virden and others of your losses at the gaming-tables. But I thank Heaven I have found this out in time. Drive on, Sam. And as for you, unhappy young man, remember that the path you are on leads straight to the gallows."

The clumsy vehicle lumbered away, leaving Sir Harry still sitting on his horse, voiceless and motionless, the purse in his outstretched hand. His face was ghastly pale and curiously thin and pinched, as though beneath the touch of death itself, and as the coach rolled away the night breeze bore back to him a faint sound like the muffled sobbing of a woman.

Slipping the purse into his pocket, to be returned at some convenient moment, he gathered up his reins and rode slowly and sadly away, a prey to a blank despair, going so slowly that a certain pair of hotly-pursuing horsemen had little difficulty in overtaking him. The rapid beat of their horses' hoofs, breaking in clamorously on his dismal thoughts, first aroused him, and then a loud shout sounded as his figure showed clear in the moonlight on the crest of the little hill he had just ascended.

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His first idea was that already the officers of the law were following him—though, indeed, such promptitude from persons usually so slow and timid seemed quite inconceivable. But a second glance told him truer, and he understood he was being pursued by the two highwaymen, Big Tom and The Black, as a challenge to whom this expedition of his had been ostensibly proposed.

Sir Harry smiled as he saw them, and a little warmth crept back to his heart. Here at last was something to be done: now he would not have to stand stock still, dumb as a fish, detected red-handed in the presence of his lady. He turned in his saddle, gave a view-hallo to let the two highwaymen know he saw them, and then rode into a dark grove of pine trees that stood near by. He entered but a few yards, and then dismounted, hoping that thus he would force them to attack him both together from the front.

His pursuers were both tall and burly men, and both wore half masks of black crape, though on the ebon face of the negro the mask was hardly visible. They were well mounted on powerful-looking horses, and were plainly well armed; and they were dressed in rich—though very soiled—attire, with a good deal of jewellery. Altogether they made as formidable a brace of scoundrels as all England could have shown, and Sir Harry began to understand better the wide and deep terror they had spread over the whole neighbouring district. He had a good view of them from where he stood, and could have fired his pistols at them with a fair chance of success; but something in him revolted at the idea of firing on unprepared men, and then he told himself that the moonlight made the best shot's aim uncertain.

The two highwaymen seemed to be holding a short conference; and then one of them—not the negro, but the one known as Big Tom—rode forward; and as he came nearer Sir Henry was more than ever impressed with the fellow's formidable proportions.

"Not much chance for me," he reflected, "if ever I get in that bear's grip"; and then his glance wandered to the black and terrifying visage of the negro, a man of almost as huge a bulk as his companion.

"Hullo, there!" shouted Big Tom, garnishing his words with many oaths and blasphemies, "you've been poaching on our estate, for we stopped a coach at the bottom of the hill there that had not a penny piece left for us."

"Yes! and made the leddy weep," simpered the negro, with an affected imitation of a fashionable beau's simper, that sat with incongruous horror on his coal-black and repulsive features. "Made the leddy weep!" he repeated, "we never make the leddies weep."

"But you did the job in style," Big Tom continued, "so if you hand over the guineas we'll content ourselves with cropping your ears. Burn me! if we don't let you go safe but for that. Eh, what do you say?"

"Why, that my pistols are on a line with your breasts," answered Sir Harry, "and when I count three I fire. One——"

But at the word each robber reined up his horse so as to protect himself from the expected bullet; and then, driving deep their spurs, they dashed furiously away. So fast they rode that for a moment Sir Harry thought they were fleeing. But at a little distance they separated and circled back, one to the right and one to the left, and Sir Harry understood they meant to try conclusions with him.

He crept back into the middle of the pine-grove, and sheltered there by the trunk of one of the trees. Yet, though he was very certain they had both entered the grove, not a sign, not a sound, not so much as the cracking of a twig betrayed their presence.

The minutes seemed to him intolerably long as he crouched there in the shadow of the pines. In a swift rush and combat he had trusted to his activity to make up in part for his lack of strength, but he knew well that if one of them laid hold of him, creeping up behind in the darkness, his chance would be gone at once.

Crouch and stare and peer as he might, and regret never so much he had not stayed out in the open, where at least he could have watched their approach and not been taken unawares, not a sign of them could he see. Then suddenly he noticed where a deeper shadow than usual seemed to be moving at the base of a tree just across a little glade that here bisected the grove, a bright path of moonlight, about six yards wide, bounded on either side by the tall, dark pines. But before Sir Harry had decided what it was the shadow had disappeared, and his chance with it, and he felt that a silent and a horrid death was creeping ever closer to him.

He thought a moment, and then he ran out into the moonlight in a crouching position, his pistol ready in his right hand, his anxious glance darting hither and thither. Almost as he appeared there sounded a sharp report; a flash of fire darted out from behind the tree where the shadow had disappeared

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"Got him! I got him, Big Tom!" shrieked the negro . . . . And on the instant the supposed dead man rose swiftly on one knee, and emptied the contents of his pistol into the villain's body,

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the moment before, and with one wild sobbing cry, Sir Harry threw up his arms and pitched face forward on the ground, there lying with arms extended, one outstretched hand clasping the pistol still.

"Got him! I got him, Big Tom!" shrieked the negro, and dashed, whooping with triumph, from his hiding-place. And on the instant the supposed dead man rose swiftly on one knee, and emptied the contents of his pistol into the villain's body.

Not a sound did the stricken man utter, nor did he stop his rush. As the bullets struck him—the pistol had been double-shotted—he leapt high in the air, but, descending he still rushed on, and Sir Harry feared his shot had failed to take serious effect. But almost as the thought crossed his mind the negro turned a complete somersault, then lay motionless and dead.

Sir Harry leaped back into shelter, and, taking his remaining pistol in his left hand, had just drawn his sword when, bellowing with rage, half frantic with wrath, Big Tom dashed out into the open and rushed down towards him, firing his pistols as he came, and as he fired hurling before him the empty weapons themselves.

His aim was wild however, and his bullets flew wide, while Sir Harry's own shot seemed also to miss. At once the huge bulk of the highwayman was upon him, and though he thrust with his light sword, and felt the point sink deep into something that gave the soft peculiar resistance of flesh, yet the next instant the weapon was twisted from his grasp, snapped in half, and flung contemptuously aside, while he himself was caught and held in a grasp so tremendous that he could struggle no more than a child.

Sir Harry shuddered a little, and a sickening sensation of helplessness came over him; for the huge and overwhelming grip that held him seemed somehow to squeeze the courage from his heart as he felt how useless were all his struggles against this giant, who held him helpless as a babe.

But, with a slow, regular motion, the highwayman began to sway to and fro on his feet, till Sir Harry, gathering courage once more, gave him a slight push on his breast, and at once, with that mere touch, sent his ponderous bulk crashing down full length on the ground.

Hardly able to believe the evidence of his own senses, Sir Harry bent down, and made out that the man was bleeding from a bullet-wound in the side and a sword-thrust so deep that it seemed to have pierced to the lungs. The young man drew back, with a little shudder, and muttered a hasty prayer as he marked the giant proportions of the man from whose grasp he had so barely escaped.

"'Fore heaven," he muttered, "had the fellow not been wounded he could have twisted my neck as easily as a cook dispatches a fat cygnet."

He found his mare, and, leading her out of that fatal grove, leapt on her back and rode away at full gallop, straight across country, to where he had left his roystering friends, who already, drinking and singing, had half-forgotten him and his wild errand—all, that is, save old Colonel Rigby, brooding silently to himself in the midst of the revelry, and Lord Virden with his evil smile and soft, sidelong glances.

It was the Colonel who first heard the sound of galloping, and, springing to his feet, he shouted for silence. Then he flung wide the shutters of one window, letting into the wine-heavy atmosphere of that great dining-room the pale moonlight and the cool night air. Even those drunken revellers ceased their clamour to listen. And then there rose a great commotion in the hall outside, and voices shouted amazedly; and then the whole company rose to their feet and stood staring at each other as the loud reverberations of a horse's hoofs came thundering nearer; and in the great doorway as it flew open showed the figure of Sir Harry, still sitting astride his foam-flecked mare.

There was a pause of utter stupefaction as the revellers stared at man and horse, wild of eye and aspect, splashed with mud and blood from head to foot. Then Lord Virden stood forward.

"'Tis a somewhat strange mode of entrance, Sir Harry," he said; "but I trust all has gone well. You have won your wager and brought me the purse doubtless, and proved the highwaymen but idle boasters?"

"Nay," said Sir Harry, "they made no idle boast, as you may tell if you go to look where they lie in a grove of pines near Shotwick Brook. And as for the guineas, why, they are here. I pray you take them"—and as he spoke he dashed the heavy purse with all his force full in the face of the luckless peer.

Like a felled ox Virden went down, stunned and bleeding, and the old Colonel yelped delight.

"Good lad, good lad!" he shouted. "I'll second you, Harry, dear child. Oh, good lad, good lad! And a good blow too!"

"Thank you, Colonel Rigby," said Sir

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Harry. "I'll be back by dawn, and then we can finish this little affair. But first there is another matter that needs my attention."

He backed the mare, and she, stepping daintily like a highbred dame, picked her way down the long hall, where the frightened servants, startled from their sleep, gaped at them in amaze—and so out again into the night.

Then Sir Harry leaned forward in his saddle and patted the mare on the neck, and whispered:

"Speed, good lass; your best speed, dear lass!"

And if before he had galloped now he galloped faster still; for if before he rode for his life and his honour now he rode for his love.

"Quicker, quicker yet, dear lass!" he murmured in the good mare's ear. And ever faster sped the long miles beneath the thunder of her flying hoofs, till at last the unsteady lights of Mr. Page's coach appeared, as it rolled on its way to the house that in another half-mile would have been reached.

"The highwayman again!" yelled the coachman; and, absolutely stupefied with fear, he jerked at the reins till the horses came to a standstill.

"Unhappy young man," said Mr. Page as Sir Harry dashed up and flung himself to the ground, "what madness is this? Have you not done evil enough for one night?"

"Sir, you are a magistrate," panted Sir Harry; "pray, sir, send some of your men to the pinegrove near Shotwick Brook, where they will find the two highwaymen who have so long pestered this neighbourhood—both dead, I think, or, at least, very sorely wounded."

**He dashed the heavy purse with all his force full in the face of the luckless peer.**

"Eh?—what?" said Mr. Page, doubting his own ears. "What do you mean?"

"Why," said Sir Harry lightly, "if one can't come at the highwaymen, surely the best plan is to make the highwaymen come at oneself. Faith! they ran after me most eagerly; and I think I can now promise you, Mr. Page, and you, Mistress Helen, that for the future you will be able to stir abroad without molestation."

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Page. "Then your robbery of us was but a pretence to bring those two villains after you?"

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"Sir," said Sir Harry, "for any inconvenience I have put you to I crave your pardon most humbly."

"Why, 'tis a very knight-errant of chivalry," cried Mr. Page, "that rides about overthrowing highwaymen instead of dragons! And most monstrous civil too," he added drily, "to be so concerned for the convenience of Mr. Page—and Mistress Helen. What say you, Nell?"

But Nell was sobbing, happily to herself, and had no words at all. Only her white hand hung just over the open coach-door, so that Sir Harry could do no less than stoop to kiss it. Nor was it withdrawn; and, indeed, he fancied he felt an answering pressure of the slim, white fingers.

"Come to dinner to-morrow, Sir Harry," said Mr. Page then. "Both we and the whole countryside owe you many thanks for ridding us of two such desperate rogues. Well, well, come to-morrow, and I'll e'en depute Nell to speak her father's gratitude. Shalt be willing, girl?"

"Nay," said Nell very softly and sweetly, "I shall have to tell Sir Harry of my own. Oh, how could you?" she added with a littl gasp of terror and admiration, for indeed the disappearance of the highwaymen removed a very real terror from her life. "Sir," she whispered, "you must teach me how to show my thanks."

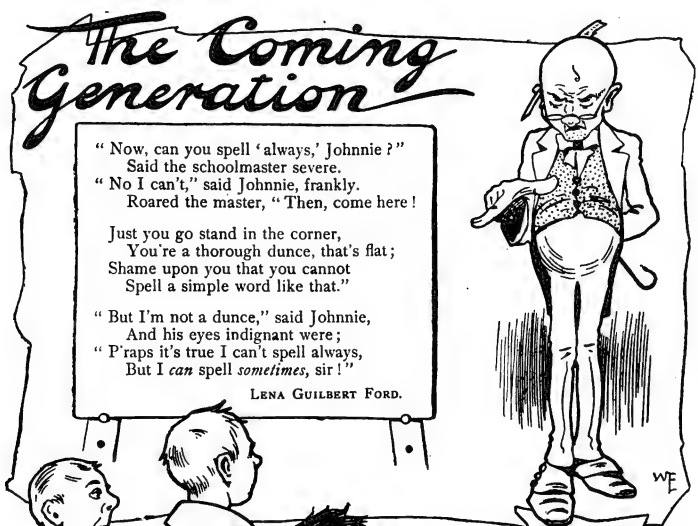
Then the coach rumbled on its way, and Sir Harry, with a warm heart, mounted his mare and rode back at a more moderate pace, and when he reached his own house he found old Colonel Rigby waiting for him.

"Ah, Colonel," he said, "is the meeting arranged?"

"My Lord Virden," said the Colonel disgustedly, "has turned coward, and taken himself to the Continent; and I doubt me it will be some time before he shows his face this side of the Channel again—just as well, perhaps, for you have sadly spoilt his beauty, Harry."

"So?" said Sir Harry in surprise. "But, Colonel, if you may not act my friend in that way, perhaps I may be able to ask you to stand by me in another and more pressing business before long."

"Ho, ho!" said the Colonel, chuckling. "So there's a wedding in the wind, eh?"


The Coming Generation
"Now, can you spell 'always,' Johnnie?"
Said the schoolmaster severe.
"No I can't," said Johnnie, frankly.
Roared the master, "Then, come here!
Just you go stand in the corner,
You're a thorough dunce, that's flat;
Shame upon you that you cannot
Spell a simple word like that."
"But I'm not a dunce," said Johnnie,
And his eyes indignant were;
"P'raps it's true I can't spell always,
But I *can* spell *sometimes*, sir!"
Lena Guilbert Ford.
WE

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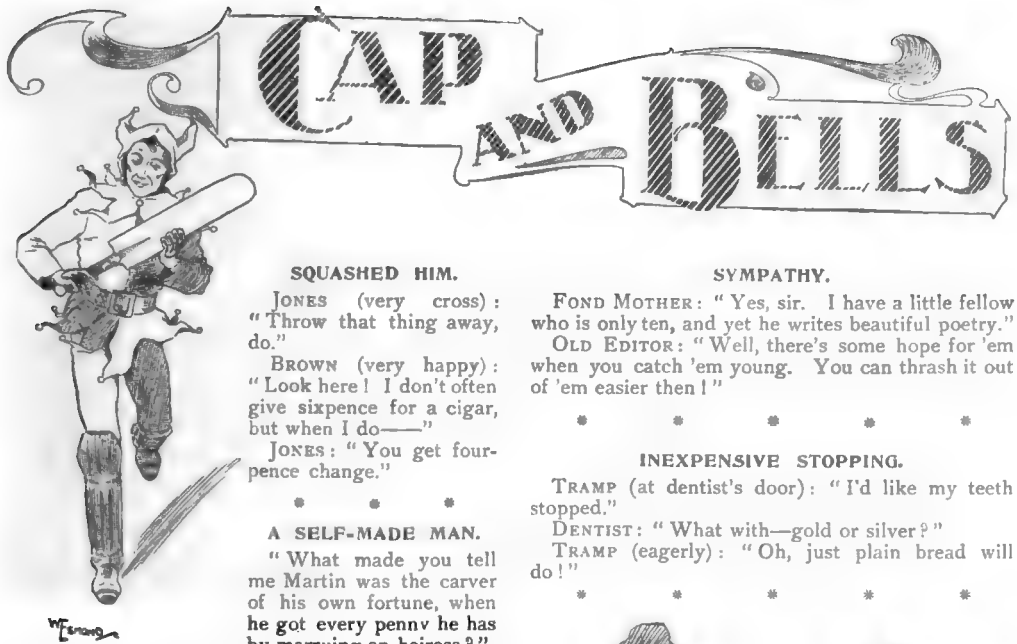



### SQUASHED HIM.

JONES (very cross): "Throw that thing away, do."

BROWN (very happy): "Look here! I don't often give sixpence for a cigar, but when I do——"

JONES: "You get fourpence change."

* * *

### A SELF-MADE MAN.

"What made you tell me Martin was the carver of his own fortune, when he got every penny he has by marrying an heiress?"

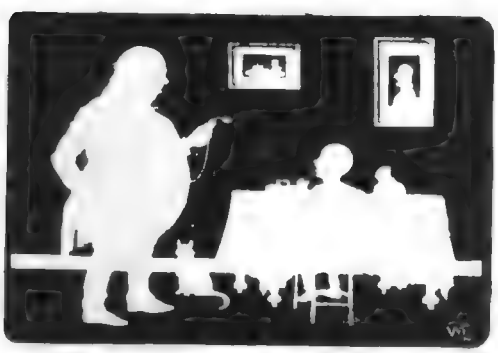
"Humph! He had to cut out half-a-dozen fellows to get her, didn't he?"

* * * * *

### THE TALE OF A SOLDIER.

**There was a young man in the Twenty-first corps,**
**Who thought he'd enlist for a year, perhaps morps;**
**He did not fear danger, he'd met it beforps.**
**But ere the first year of his service was orps,**
**He met a huge lion which came to his dorps**
**And springing upon him resistlessly borps**
**The gallant young grenadier down to the florps,**
**Then standing above him with terrible rorps,**
**The animal ruthlessly mangled and torps**
**His body as well as the clothes that he worps.**
**And after the tearing and wounding him sorps,**
**He finally left him all welt'ring in gorps,**
**With blood freely oozing from every porps.**
**In this sad condition he thought of the lorps**
**He acquired at school in the sweet days of yorps**
**And loud, in his pain, he was heard to deplorps**
**The day that he went to the Twenty-first corps.**

* * * * *



### HE JUDGED BY APPEARANCES.

**Uncle George: "Don't over-eat yourself, Jimmy, my boy. I never did when I was your age."**

**Jimmy (*sotto voce*): "When did you begin, then?"**

### SYMPATHY.

FOND MOTHER: "Yes, sir. I have a little fellow who is only ten, and yet he writes beautiful poetry."

OLD EDITOR: "Well, there's some hope for 'em when you catch 'em young. You can thrash it out of 'em easier then!"

* * * * *

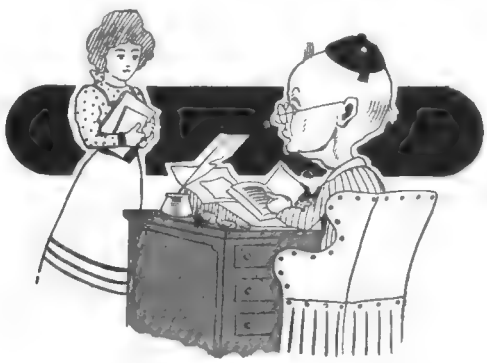
### INEXPENSIVE STOPPING.

TRAMP (at dentist's door): "I'd like my teeth stopped."

DENTIST: "What with—gold or silver?"

TRAMP (eagerly): "Oh, just plain bread will do!"

* * * * *



### THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK.

**Miss Phofar (who has been attending a course of lectures): "Oh, Professor, I saw such a funny old fossil in the museum. I thought of you at once!"**

**(Professor Rambler, the eminent geologist, does not know whether to feel flattered or not.)**

* * * * *

### VENGEANCE IN PROSPECT.

VISITOR: "Why, how big you are growing, Tommy! If you don't look out you will be getting taller than your father."

TOMMY: "I don't care if I do. I'll get even then. Pa'll have to wear my old trousers cut down for him!"

* * * * *

### THERE'S A USE FOR EVERYTHING.

"What shall I do?" she moaned, "I have smashed my bicycle?"

"Let me see the wreck?" said her mother. "Why, these wheels are very light indeed!"

"Yes, the lightest manufactured."

"Well, there is no need to waste them. I'll take them to the milliner's and have some trimmings put on them. They will make some lovely hats for you and your sister to wear."

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I. "What are you pouring water on that flower for, daddy?"
"Why, to make it grow, of course?"

II. Then daddy sat down and fell asleep. Elsie looked at the three hairs on his bald head and thought hard.

* * *

### HAD HIM!

"How will you have your eggs cooked?" asked the waiter.

"Make any difference in the cost of 'em?" inquired the cautious customer with the brimless hat and faded beard.

"No."

"Then cook them on the top of a slice of ham," said the customer, greatly relieved.

* * *

### SERVE HIM RIGHT.

MIKE (going down a ladder): "Hould on, Pat. Don't yez come on the ladder till oi'm down. It's ould and cracked."

PAT (getting on): "Arrah, be aisy. It would sarve th' boss right to have to buy a new one."

III. "What are you doing that for, Elsie?"
"Why, to make your hair grow, daddy!"

* * *

### OBSERVATIONS ON BOTANY.

"I have noticed one thing about widows' weeds," said his reverence.

"What's that?"

"They rarely interfere with the growth of orange blossoms on the same soil."

* * *

### HER WINTER OUTFIT.

**Her feet are shod in mannish boots,**
**Her hands are in a muff,**
**Her coat is of the warmest fur,**
**Her gown is heavy stuff.**

**Her collar, that she wears turned up,**
**Comes almost to her nose,**
**Then on her head she wears for warmth**
**Two feathers and a rose.**

* * * * * * * * * * *

### QUITE TRUE.

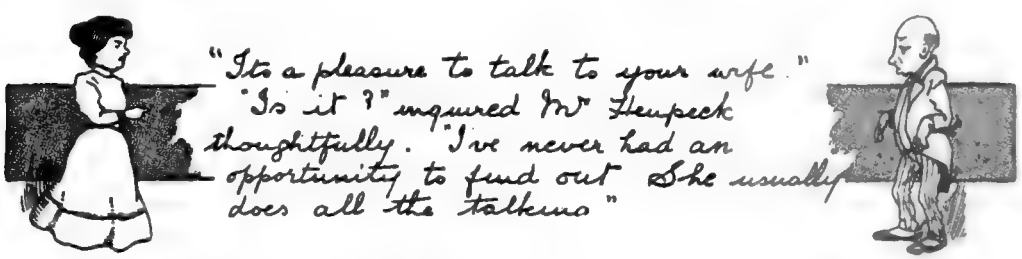
"What term is applied to a man who signs another man's name on a cheque?"

"Ten years, generally."

* * * * *

There is little more tantalising to a man than to go home with something in his mind he wants to scold his wife about, and find company there and be obliged to behave agreeably.

* * * * *


"Its a pleasure to talk to your wife."
"Is it?" inquired Mr Henpeck thoughtfully. "I've never had an opportunity to find out. She usually does all the talking."

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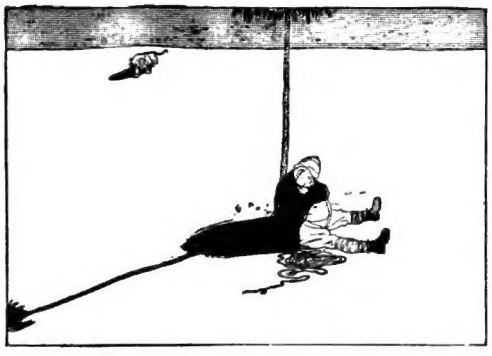
# HOW MR. GLOBE-TROTTER CAPTURED A LION.

*(A True Story—according to Mr. Globe-Trotter.)*



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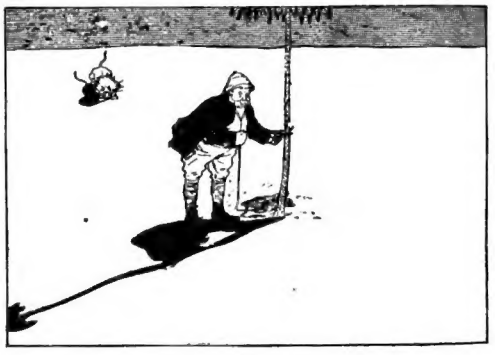

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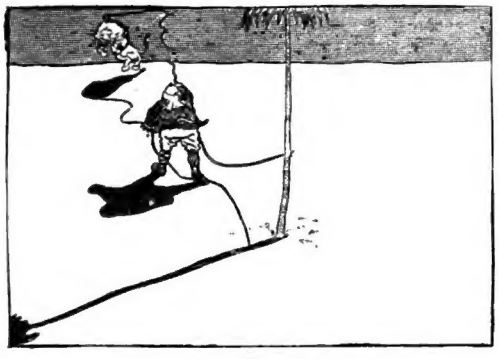

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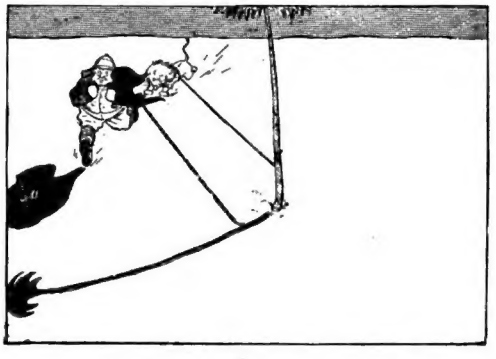

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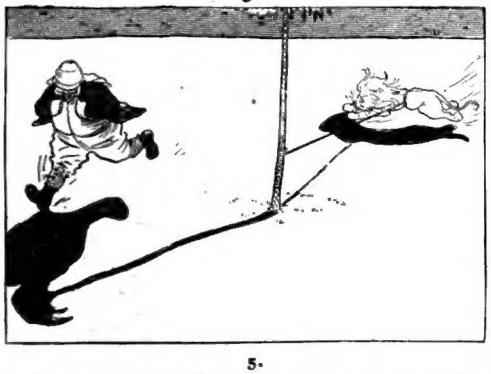

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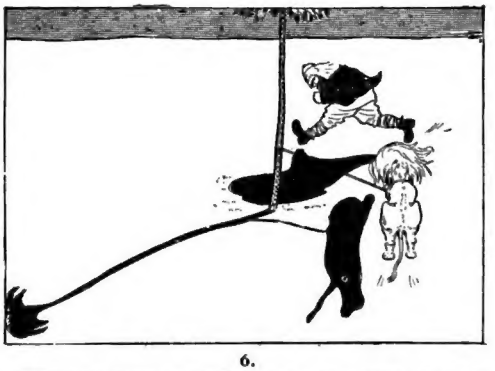

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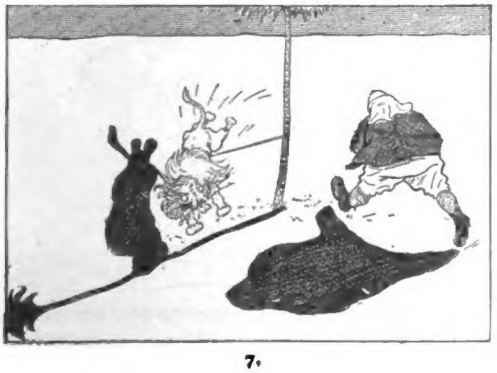

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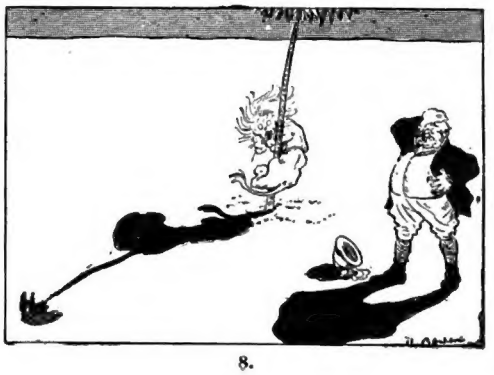

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### RIGHT AFTER ALL.

The other day a man was knocked down and run over by a bicycle. Scrambling to his feet he began to abuse the rider.

"Sir!" he shouted. "I want to tell you that you are no gentleman—er—excuse me madam—miss" (as he found himself talking to a bloomerite); "but," raising his voice, "anyhow, I was right."

* * *

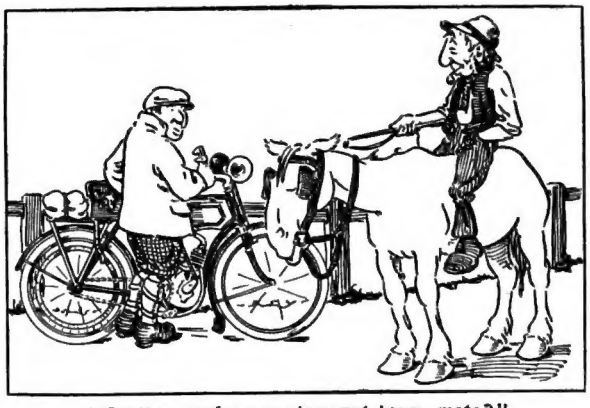
About the most discouraging thing that comes to a man in his life is the desire to thrash an enemy, coupled with the belief that he can't do it.

* * *

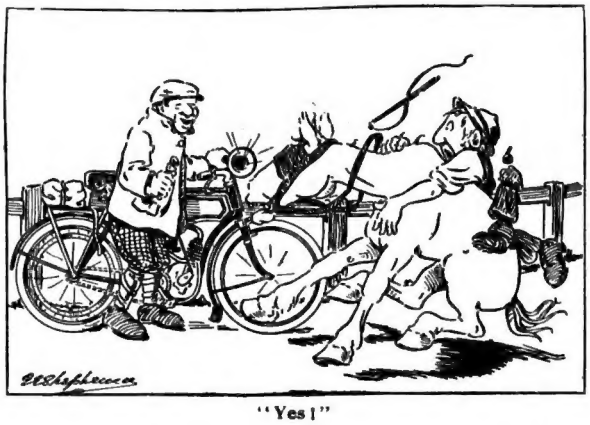
### NO HARM DONE.

FIRST TOURIST (from South America): "I just got a letter from home. They have had two wars and a revolution since we left."

SECOND TOURIST: "Anybody hurt?"



**"Can't ye make your trumpet blow, mate?"**



**"Yes!"**

* * * * *

### RHYME OF THE TRAM-CAR.

**Ram 'em in, jam 'em in, push 'em in, pack;**
**Hustle 'em, jostle 'em, poke 'em in the back;**
**Tramp on 'em, stamp on 'em, make the bones crack;**
**Fat women, thin women, Tom, Dick, and Jack.**
**Hang on, cling on, by teeth or by hair;**
**Ah, there; now stay there, and pass up your fare!**

* * * * *

### A NEW KIND OF SEED.

**Visitor (on the field of Waterloo): "Are you planting potatoes on the old battle-field, farmer?"**

**Farmer: "No, sir, these are not potatoes. I'm just scattering a few bullets for the benefit of English and American tourists."**

### THOSE CHILDREN!

An incident of Johnnie's earlier years compels me to admit that he comes under somebody's generalisation that "children are born liars," or "romancers," as I choose to call them.

We have a morella-cherry tree growing against a wall at the bottom of the garden, and at the time of which I speak the cherries were ripening apace, and I was calculating how many bottles of "keep it handy" would be added this year to my store.

The children had strict injunctions not to touch the cherries. I met Tommy on this particular morning advancing meditatively up the garden path; his mouth was reeking with cherry juice, and a glance in the direction of the tree showed me it was well-nigh stripped. With the mouth which was at the same moment giving most damning evidence against him, he calmly denied having touched the fruit. "And what did you do with the stones?" "Threw them away, of course!"

* * * * *

Our eldest boy was staying at the house of a relative who was about to undergo a slight operation. We asked him to send us a wire to let us know the result. It so happened that an aged aunt in the same house expired on the same day, and this is the telegram that reached us:—

"Operation quite successful. Aunt dead."

What the post office officials at our end thought of us we dared not guess, but we took hasty steps to quit the neighbourhood.

* * *

### STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER.

**English Snob: "I think America a wretched country. Imagine being governed by people you can't ask to dinner."**

**Fair American: "But England is governed by those who'll never invite you to dinner."**

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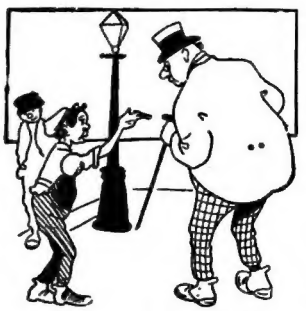

"The modern servant doesn't know her place."

"She can't. She changes it too often."

* * *

**A CRITICISM.**

**"Say, old chap, I wish you would get better cigars. These wiffs of yourn is awful!"**

* * * * *

**HARD LINES.**

HUSBAND: "Here, they have brought me an account for a ball costume; how is that?"

WIFE: "Oh, don't you remember? It is for the green dress I wore last year at the ball where we first met."

HUSBAND: "So-o-o-o, and now I am expected to pay for the net with which I was caught!"

* * *

**A POET'S EPITAPH.**

**He wrote a verse on spring one morn,**
**Received a cheque before the night;**
**The jury, being duly sworn,**
**Declared that he had died of fright.**

* * *

**NO ARGUMENT AGAINST TOBACCO.**

OLD DRYWATER: "My boy, in all creation you won't find any animal except man who makes a habit of smoking."

YOUNG PUFFS: "Yes, sir; but neither do I know any other animal that cooks his meals!"

**BETTER LEFT UNSAID.**

**Mrs. Astley: "You can't go home while it is raining so. Stay and have dinner with us."**

**Mr. Chump: "Oh, no, thank you! It isn't so bad as all that."**

The three degrees in medical treatment: Positive ill, comparative pill, superlative bill.

* * *

**THE SERVANT QUESTION.**

**Muggins: "My cook left because we refused to treat her as one of the family."**

**Buggins: "Humph! My cook expects to be treated as company."**

* * * * *

**ANTI-CLIMAX.**

"I remember as well as if it only happened yesterday, that in my younger days I once walked twenty miles at a stretch for the purpose of thrashing a hated rival."

"And did you return on foot?"

"No, they brought me back on an ambulance."

* * *

**MATERNAL SOLICITUDE.**

"Dear me!" cried the nurse. "The baby has swallowed my railway ticket! What shall I do?"

"Go and buy another," returned the mother. "I'm not going to have the baby punched!"

* * *

**A JUST REWARD.**

INQUIRING PERSON: "What time did the hotel catch fire?"

FIREMAN: "Midnight."

INQUIRING PERSON: "Everybody get out safely?"

FIREMAN: "All except the night watchman. They couldn't wake him up in time."

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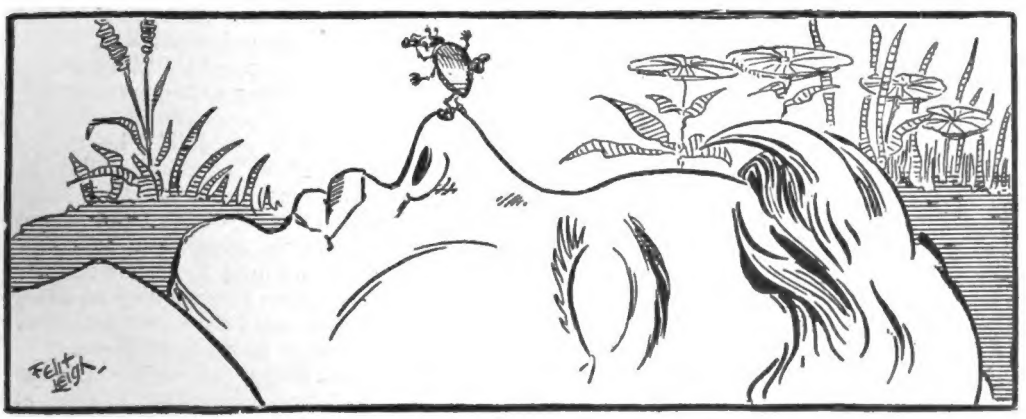


**WHEN ONE HAS A NAP IN THE ORCHARD.**

**Beetle Tourist (at the summit): "Magnificent! I must climb up here some morning and see the sun rise."**

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# MR. EDITOR —HIS PAGE

*A few chatty paragraphs which you would do well to read.*

### THE "OLD MAN IN THE CORNER."

"The Hocussing of Cigarette," on page 19, the second of the Baroness E. Orczy's new series, has considerably elevated my private opinion of—myself. For when, in reading the story, I stopped at the crucial moment in order to solve the mystery, it took me a very short while to hit on the truth, and discover not only the real author of the crime, but also his motives. So sure was I that my deductions were correct, that I put them all down on paper, together with a critical query against what I considered a weak point in the solution.

"Why," I asked, "should Keeson slink into the stables at night, when he could go there at any time and poison the mare after distracting the keeper's attention?" This objection seemed to me very shrewd and subtle—but the "Old Man in the Corner" was one too many for me. His explanation of precisely this point seems to me the most artistic touch in the whole story. I stand abashed before his superior intelligence.

How have *you* fared this time, I wonder?

### CONTINENTAL JOURNALISM.

I said something a short while ago about the tribulations of continental—and especially German and Russian—editors. Shortly afterwards, curiously enough, I came into contact with one of the latter nationality—a gentleman who had recently resigned his position as sub-editor of a well-known Russian magazine, whose name I would rather not try to pronounce and certainly won't attempt to *spell*. His experiences are very interesting.

"We journalists," he said, "live in perpetual fear of the authorities. When we read our proof sheets we are always on the *qui vive* for anything which may possibly be construed into an attack on the Government, the Tsar, or some powerful official. Why, I have known the authorities spend considerable time and labour in attempting to discover a treasonable cypher in a ridiculously innocent article on China, just because the first eight capital letters happened to spell the Tsar's Christian name. We ourselves have been once severely reprimanded because our journal contained an advertisement in which a certain jeweller described himself as possessing the finest gems in Russia. This, the Censor said, was a distinctly reprehensible statement, because it cast a doubt on the genuineness of the Imperial Crown Jewels!"

### MR. X.'S LITTLE JOKE.

Mr. X. is hugely delighted with himself over the result of his problem "Before Answering, Think," which appeared in the March number of the ROYAL. The paragraph ran as follows:—

> A frog in the bottom of a well, twelve feet deep, climbs up three feet in a day, and falls back two feet in the endeavour to clamber out. How long does it take him to get out? "Why, of course, twelve days." Wrong; it would take nine days, for when he gets to the top he does not fall back.

Personally, I was very annoyed at so very obvious a slip. Certainly, the frog would take ten days, not nine. Accordingly, I sent for Mr. X. and spoke to him about it.

To my surprise he chuckled with glee.

"I don't see anything to laugh about it," I said sternly.

"Well, well, you *are* dull!" he replied. "Don't you see," he continued, 'that the point of the whole joke lies in the title: 'Before Answering, THINK?' Well, all these people who have written in have been beautifully caught—they didn't think! If they had, they would not have fallen into my trap so easily. It was the finest catch I have ever set—don't you think my salary ought to be raised?"

I said that before answering I would THINK, and I have decided not to raise his salary. Mr. X. now has my orders to set no more of his "Extra Special Catches."

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